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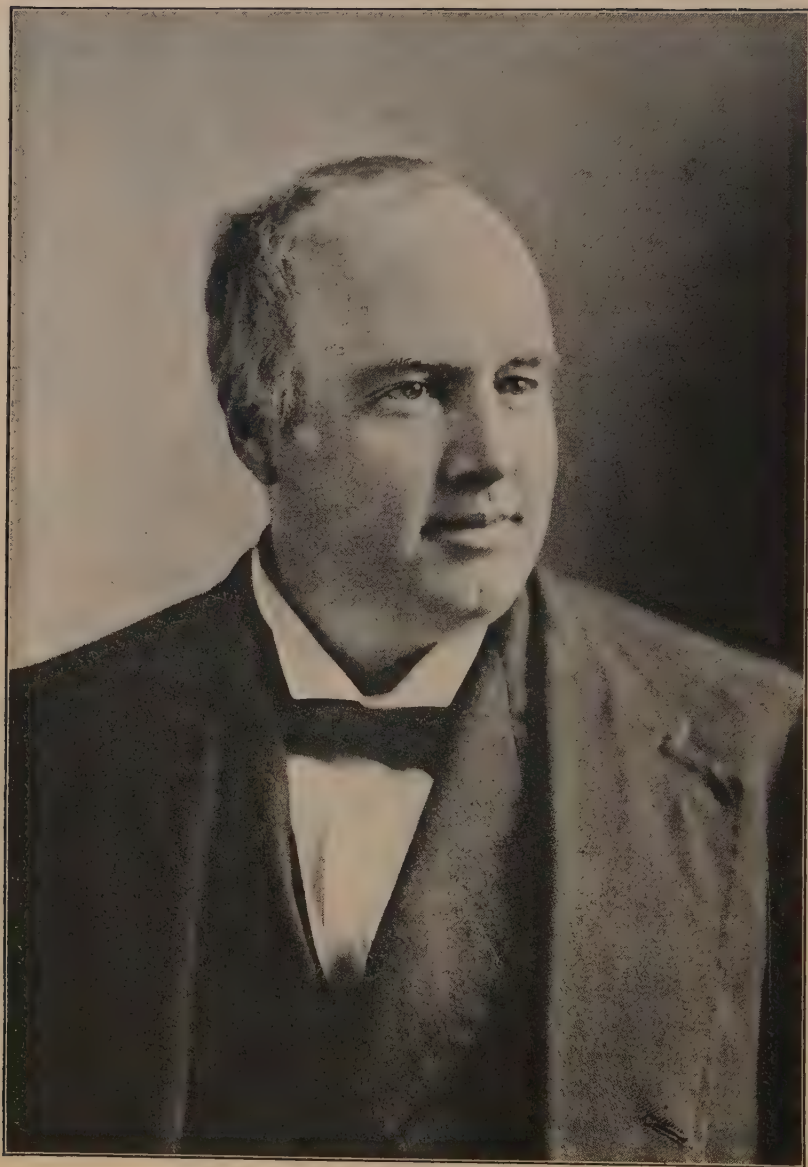




COLONEL BOB INGERSOLL







ROBERT G. INGERSOLL



41c.

COLONEL BOB INGERSOLL

A BIOGRAPHICAL NARRATIVE OF THE GREAT  
AMERICAN ORATOR AND AGNOSTIC

By  
CAMERON ROGERS

*Author of "The Magnificent Idler"*



GARDEN CITY  
DOUBLEDAY, PAGE & COMPANY  
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FOR MAMMA





*I have known him twenty years and was fond of him, and held him in as high honour as I have held any man living or dead. . . .*

*His was a great and beautiful spirit, he was man, all man, from his crown to his footsoles. . . .*

MARK TWAIN.

*In his mind common sense rose to genius.*

GEORG BRANDES.

*America don't know to-day how proud she ought to be of Ingersoll.*

WALT WHITMAN.

*I never saw him before that night, when I clasped his hand in the presence of an assemblage of citizens. Yet I consider him as one of the greatest men of the age.*

HENRY WARD BEECHER.

*One of the great characters of modern times and the greatest of orators.*

ANDREW CARNEGIE.

*To such as you I would send perpetual gifts of fruit and flowers.*

JOHN BURROUGHS TO INGERSOLL.

*His life and work have been an inspiration to the whole earth, shedding light in the dark places which so sadly needed light.*

LUTHER BURBANK.

*I am greatly obliged to you for the pleasure given me by the knowledge . . . that Colonel Ingersoll, the man above whom all others I should have wished and hoped to meet if I had visited America during his lifetime, found something in my work worthy of his regard or sympathy.*

SWINBURNE.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

To Mrs. Walston H. Brown and Mrs. Wallace M. Probasco of New York, Colonel Ingersoll's daughters, and to Mrs. Eva Ingersoll Swazey, his granddaughter, I wish to express my deepest gratitude and appreciation for a sympathy, an interest, and a coöperation without the aid of which such a volume would have been impossible to achieve. I desire most particularly to thank them for placing in my hands manuscripts and letters hitherto unpublished and much valuable material which otherwise would have proved unavailable.

To the House of Harper I am deeply indebted for permission to publish three letters from Mark Twain to Colonel Ingersoll and one to Mrs. Clemens; to Dr. Clara E. Barrus for allowing me to include four letters from John Burroughs; to Harry Augustus Garfield for his kindness in permitting me to make use of two notes from his father, President Garfield, to Colonel Ingersoll, and one from his mother; and to Mrs. Walter Damrosch for giving her consent to the publication of two notes written by her father, James G. Blaine, to the subject of this biography.

CAMERON ROGERS.

*March, 1926*

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COLONEL BOB INGERSOLL



# COLONEL BOB INGERSOLL

## CHAPTER I

THE little boy perceived with some concern that his explanatory monologue dealing with the adventures of Wulp the wooden bear was being no longer attended to. He checked the liquid recital of a familiar chapter and sat back upon his little haunches, in his round and solemn eyes the shadow of reproof growing visibly threatening. Wulp, called thus because there existed some doubt as to whether he was indeed a bear or not a bear at all but a wolf, remained four-square and solid in repose, awaiting, perennially without emotion, the next foray across the bare, uneven floor. Save for Wulp and the little boy, who was called Robin, Robert being held unsuitably ponderous for one of his stature, which was inconsiderable, his figure, which was almost perfectly round, and for his intent, energetic inquisitiveness, the room, dark and growing cold, was empty. The audience, which had been composed of Robin's brother Ebon, aged four, and two years his elder, had vanished. In the room above, the footfalls that all the morning had marched and halted, shuffled and resumed their spaced and steady beat, were now silent. Robin, cocking his round head upward, experienced a sudden dismal loneliness. Disregarding Wulp, poor company in moments of crises, he got upon his legs and, in a

rolling rush, gained the window. The snow lay deep upon the sill without, but its consistency, hitherto so fascinating, of feathers and powdered crystal, no longer absorbed his large-eyed attention, and the novelty of the drifting flakes was waning.

His loneliness became suddenly a thing that smote him in the pit of his stomach, and his fat legs folded beneath him so that he sat down upon the floor and yelled. This he had been told expressly not to do, since it disturbed his mother, who had lain now for many days ill in the room above. The yell, ending in a wail of acute misery, brought things about as Robin had foreseen it would. He was no longer alone. The door opened, and his father, a tall man and very wide, all black save where the high collar cupped a chin, almost as white as the collar's starched points, stood over him like a tower filled with happenings. Confidently blind to them, Robin laid hold of the black columns before his eyes and thrust his head into them, a second yell dying unborn in a series of soft snufflings. He felt himself lifted suddenly into the air and disposed upon his father's shoulder, from which exciting vantage he noted with interest that tears were running from his father's eyes one after another down the smooth runlet between cheek and nose. The tall man and the little boy passed from the room, Robin ducking at the door so that his round head with its fuzzy covering of soft gold lay next to the great back-swept mane of his father's.

In the room above, Mary Livingston Ingersoll, her hand, its delicate length transparent now, clasped tightly in both little paws of her second son, Ebon Clark, lay and saw the near horizon, the white almost mingling with

the gray, grow yet more indistinct in the December twilight. Her life, with all its rigid abstentions and stern purities, was being loosed from her now in little gasps, while her mind, in which perplexities had given way to endless combinations of memories, remained as clear as the snowflakes that, touching for an instant the gray panes, disclosed innumerable jewelled prisms before slipping softly into the level hummock of their fellows. She was dying unwillingly, but convinced that it was God's will that was being done, and that in the half light of this winter evening was being completed the predestined pattern of her days. She was not afraid, but it was the blood of those Colonial Livingstons, her ancestors, and not the sombre precepts of her faith, that was holding her to an intrepid exit, for as expounded by the Reverend John C. Ingersoll, her husband, these guaranteed but slender handholds upon salvation. Disciple of Cartwright and fast follower of Calvin, Priest Ingersoll was wont to talk intimately of hell fire, and Mary his wife, not wholly believing, was, nevertheless, with her time upon her, unable to forget his words. She had been a good woman, a woman of fibre and great courage, who had but a little time before her illness prepared and circulated throughout the state a petition to Congress that slavery be abolished in the District of Columbia. The first act of its kind ever performed by a woman, it had aroused comment in New York that had been not always kind, for that state in 1835, admiring good women, none the less preferred them not overly intelligent and inaudible.

Certain of the orthodox among her husband's Congregationalist flock had looked askance at all of this, and

had hinted that, since their God permitted slavery to be, it could not be loathsome in His sight, wherefore the preacher's lady was presumptuous and would no doubt do penance for her presumption in the orthodox fashion which meant hell and its numberless flaming waves, each one of which would carry upon its yellow crest the word "forever," even as Jonathan Edwards had foretold. Mary Ingersoll, as had befitted a daughter of Judge Robert Livingston of the Livingstons of Livingston Manor in New York, and the wife of John Ingersoll, late bachelor of arts of Middlebury College in Vermont and now Congregational preacher of the Word in Cazenovia, Madison County, N. Y., had ignored those whom she knew privily wished her evil. In her heart, she had repudiated a God, were He even her husband's, who did not abominate slavery. Fortunately, John Ingersoll, too, never lost an opportunity to gird at it, so that in his eyes her soul upon this issue stood in no danger of damnation, but as her illness had grown upon her and set her pondering upon Eternity, it had occurred to her that God, being by His own chronicles somewhat tempestuous and easily inclined to wrath, there was no telling what He might have in store for her. Mary Ingersoll believed utterly and implicitly every word in the Testaments both Old and New, and certain passages in the former had caused her not a little anguish of spirit as she lay abed, the Bible open beside her upon the rough-spun counterpane and a volume of Jonathan Edwards beneath her hand.

But this evening she thought no more of the astonishing tantrums of Jehovah. A memory of her husband as he had been fourteen years before when studying theology



in Vermont: a tall young man of twenty-nine, but just graduated from college with a reputation for oratory and great physical strength; handsome, a little arrogant, a little childish and infinitely sincere, filled her with a sudden tenderness for the big man whose hair was already as white as the snow whispering against the panes, and whose stern face was lined with sorrow for those who, beyond the radius of his ministrations, were doomed to perpetual torment. In these, her last hours, it was the agony, not of the fires of which he preached so movingly, but of abandoning him that stirred her failing heart and impelled the easy, silent tears of weakness. Her husband, for all his strength and his convictions, was such a baby, such a pathetic baby who, without her to care for him, would live Heaven only knew what sort of a life, without the proper things to eat, or neat and mended clothes to wear. And the children, Ebon, in whose little hands her own was clasped so firmly, and especially Robin, for whose globular person and incessant curiosity about life she had planned such delightful things, what would become of them? She was breathing with difficulty. Beside her, her son whose four years had not prepared him for this silent watch beside his mother, who ordinarily would have sent him off to bed an hour before, began to feel a little frightened. Between his hands his mother's hand was very cold and the room was quite dark now.

John Ingersoll, who had left his Mary's bedside, was now returning. At the sudden wail from below she had turned a little upon the pillows. "There's the baby. We had forgotten him." Robin, though almost three, was known as the baby, a title that was beginning to arouse his dis-

pleasure. Her husband, silent as he had been for hours, quiet save when in the agony of his silence he had paced the floor, had arisen and gone downstairs. Now he came again into the room, Robin upon his shoulder bouncing with excitement.

Robin was put upon his mother's bed. John Ingersoll lit candles. Ebon, deprived of his mother's hand, laid hold of the woollen sleeve of her nightdress instead. The tiny cones of flame springing from the yellow tapers cast the faces of the dying woman and her children into sudden relief. The father, outside the circle of light, sat motionless, his white head cradled in his hands.

"Kiss Mother good-night, my darlings. Good-night, good-night." The voice was a whisper.

The snow was deep next morning when the little boys woke. December 3d, only three weeks before Christmas. There was a strange woman in the kitchen who gave them breakfast and gulped noisily at intervals, so that Robin became deeply interested. He had never before seen so many grown-up people cry as he had these last two days. A strange man in the parlour looked out the window at the even sweep of white upon which mischievous winds descended to spin little whorls of snow, and when Ebon and Robin entered, blew his nose loudly.

"Well, lads, it's a white Christmas."

Ebon replied courteously, "Yes, sir."

Robin was silent, since he had discovered Wulp, the wooden bear, miserably recumbent upon its back scant inches from the tremendous heels of the strange man. A voice freighted with thick emotion arrived mysteriously as though by a sort of higher ventriloquism. "A black

Christmas it'll be for they, poor darlings, and for himself, poor sainted man and for herself, poor lady, Mary rest her, ochone, ochone!" The voice ceased in a series of gulps. Ebon, frightened at first, recognized these and maintained a pale composure, but Robin, having rescued Wulp, laid hold of his brother and summoned a yell. The strange man closed the door to the kitchen. "Don't mind, boys. A silly Papist who'll rue her silliness in hell hereafter, but for the present she's a good soul and the only body to be reached at such a season." He resumed his position at the window, his hands beneath his coat tails. Ebon, plunged into mystery, preserved a half-hearted interest in the zigzag travels of Wulp, now actively directed by Robin upon the floor. The dark morning waned.

In the afternoon there were neighbours in the house and a service such as they had many times experienced in their father's church, and still later everyone went in sleighs to the cemetery, where a black box was put into ground that was black and white like a cake with white icing cut into jaggedly with the knife.

That evening their father sat with them both upon his knees before a fire that, with unaccustomed hands, he had built and lit in the kitchen. He told them stories of Daniel and the young David, of Esther and the hanging of Haman, and inevitably, from an habitual process of narrative, he spoke of the sea of fire that awaited those who transgressed the laws of a jealous Jehovah. His head bowed upon his chest above the two little scalps that were prickling with the sudden passion in his voice, he fell silent, and in a little while carried them, both sleeping, to their beds.

As the month wore on and even Christmas day passed without the reappearance of their mother, Ebon and Robin became reconciled to the fact that it would probably be a long time before she came again to them. The routine of their days began to overlay the mystery of her sleep and her departure, and the two children became inseparable, speaking a language that none save their own diminutive selves could understand. Ebon, born on December 12, 1831, at Hanover, in Oneida County, N. Y., where at the time his father was pastor of a Congregational church, was John Ingersoll's second son and had been christened Ebenezer Clark, a name that had afterward given Mary Ingersoll some qualms, so that he came to be called Ebon or Clark, as the spirit moved. John, born in 1823, was the oldest son, and Mary Jane, born a year earlier, the oldest child. Robin, christened Robert Green, after the Reverend Beriah Green, an abolitionist of note, had been born in Dresden, Torrey Township, Yates County, N. Y., on August 11, 1833, and so was, in Ebon's estimation, a cadet whose welfare and protection depended upon him and him alone, for John was away at Yale and Mary Jane in Ogdensburg with her grandmother Livingston. Was Robin bewildered and set upon by his contemporary Cazenovians, Ebon routed them and beat them, while his junior charged hopelessly in the rear, his round little person unable to achieve speed but his spirit vocally indomitable. Was Robin found depleting Mrs. Katherine's store of cookies while that excellent cook, her generous mouth filled with clothespins, was affixing the week's laundry to the line, it was Ebon who introduced into the subsequent debate the ingenious theory that a

family of mice made clandestine raids upon the cookie jar, and so swept her mind of perplexities, though she had seen with her own eyes the globular infant who was the true culprit retiring in good order from the shelves. These services Robin rewarded with absolute loyalty and passionate affection. As he grew older, he was constantly with Ebon, foregoing that desire for an individual existence that small boys are prone to harbour. In 1836, when John Ingersoll quitted Cazenovia and left a devoted flock who had shaken with terror beneath his pulpit so long that they had come to consider Satan and his crowded realm almost in the light of old friends, to become pastor of the Congregational church of Hampton in Oneida County, Robin and Ebon, an indissoluble unit, had come to represent to each other substitution for the fled affection of their mother.

Hampton proved to the brothers to be much the same as Cazenovia, save that they lived in a larger house which, owing to the absence of such a one as Mrs. Katherine, was always untidy, and in the orchard of which lived many fine apple trees, fruitful in season, and out of season interesting as the abodes of robins. The eggs of these birds the children collected in the proper season, devised games to be played by two children only, and hearkened patiently to their father's sermons. These, little by little, were causing John Ingersoll to be known as an Evangelist of mark, and as it was his custom not infrequently to preach from morning until less than an hour of sundown, his hearers took their ways home disturbed and much loosened in their minds with remorse and fear of the Hereafter. There was one convert who came regularly



with an enthusiasm almost like that of the masochist who secures a certain lamentable ecstasy from pain inflicted upon himself. Later he said to one inquiring of John Ingersoll's corrective eloquence:

"When I went to hear Priest Ingersoll, I could scarcely take time to eat my dinner. I knew my soul was in jeopardy, and, fearing lest I lose one moment, I ran all the way back. He made salvation seem so plain, so easy, I wanted to take it to my heart without delay." There were others who never left the church at all lest the devil seize them as they sat at their lunches, and, nipping them in his hell-blackened hand, hoick them away into the flames before their pastor might cry avaunt. These sat with clasped hands and heads bowed lest, in his pacings before the pulpit, which it was his wont to quit, or in the aisles, John Ingersoll fix them suddenly with his black eyes, and read in theirs the secret turpitudes and lusts, the little meannesses and evil thoughts with which each had damned his or her soul throughout the preceding week. For a time those who rebelled secretly against the tyrannous thunder of his warnings welcomed a new belief, "Perfectionism," a convenient one, since it set forth that, Christ being to such an extent in every Christian, it was impossible for any Christian to sin. The joyful content of the new faith was such that many in Oneida County at once forswore the less hopeful and long-winded periods of John Ingersoll, and were to be seen abroad upon the Sabbath, Jehovah's Sabbath and in Hampton, John Ingersoll's, laughing and singing and not infrequently drinking, but Perfectionism waned early, and the Perfectionists themselves crept, trembling, one by one back

into the church of the Congregationalists, and were saddened and much chastened when they heard what Jehovah held in store for them.

Indeed, it was considered that John Ingersoll alone had defended the true faith and destroyed the false, so that his honour and his saintliness were much increased. Thirty converts joined his church, and when Ebon and Robin went abroad, bound often enough on errands unsanctified by their father, members of his congregation pointed them out as children who, with such a parent, could not fail to be godly men and follow in his footsteps.

## CHAPTER II

IN APRIL, 1838, John Ingersoll moved to yet another field, and the Presbyterians of Belleville, in Jefferson County, stern folk of the very sinew of Knox, were strengthened and comforted in their hearts as for the first time they hearkened to their new pastor. Priest Ingersoll, having slain the worm of Perfectionism, now resumed with a fresh ardour his attacks on slavery, and though it was on account of these that he had departed from Hampton, and it had come to his ears that certain divines minded like himself had fared roughly with mobs for their utterances, he bated therefor neither candour nor passion.

Preaching of a Sabbath morning to his congregation against slavery, he devoted the afternoon hours to the salvation of their souls, the pursuit in which he took most joy, but each day in the week he strove to purify and strengthen those of his small sons.

Robin, for instance, returning from school one afternoon when the October sun had achieved the last tints upon the apples in the orchards that flanked his way, became duly fascinated by their russet rotundity and sat down to meditate acquisition. Anon came Ebon whistling, a habit lately learnt, and paused. The apples were pointed out to him, and the fact that boughs of one tree overhung the public road and therefore the ownership of the apples thereon was a debatable point. The point



was debated and, subsequent to the decision reached, the apples that overhung the road were knocked down with stones and eaten upon the spot. Ashbel Riggs, from whose orchard the tree in question sprang, having watched this from some distance, now came nearer and reopened the debate.

"Say, son, whose apples ye eating?" Ebon, addressed, was waylaid among unmeant casuistries and, finally, hacking away explanations with singular courage, observed that they were anybody's that came along.

Ashbel, confounded at first, became deeply interested, and on the theory that anger destroys judgment, maintained, not without effort, the discussion on a purely argumentative basis.

"What in tunket d'ye mean?"

In large round childish words the proximity of the high-road to the fruit and the non-infraction of the law of trespass were explained to him now by Ebon and now by Robin and finally by both together. Their defense at an end, they stopped, not a little pleased with the logic of it all, and resumed their browsing. Ashbel, passing swiftly from admiration to irritation and thence to an amalgam of both, considered them with a speculative and flashing eye. Finally he spat over the wall and made his decision.

"I'll wop ye both. Durned if ye don't need it, law or no law."

He sought without haste a firm stone on which to place his foot preparatory to reaching the road, and having found it, swept his stage. It was bare. The actors were gone, save only himself, and even as he gazed, Robin, by a

magnificent burst of speed, attained the corner of the lane and disappeared. A handful of cores lay between the grassy ruts, and Ashbel, a slow man but steady, picked them up and placed them in his pocket.

"Reckon I'll talk to Priest," was his sole observation, and Ebon, scouting diligently, in the fullness of time beheld him before the house. John Ingersoll, preparatory to an evening service, was pacing the parlour floor, rehearsing in his mind certain sinful follies of mankind the exculpation of which he would anon advocate and explain. The one maidservant of the household, a woman in age but with a sprightly jocular spirit, knocked upon the door and made it known to him that Farmer Riggs waited outside to speak with the pastor. John Ingersoll, arriving upon his threshold, beheld Ashbel examining a handful of objects collected in the palm of his hand.

"Good-evening to you, Ashbel."

"Good-evening to you, Mr. Ingersoll, sir."

"What have you there, Ashbel?"

"Them's evidence, Mr. Ingersoll, of something I come to ask ye about. Down yonder one of my apple trees grows nigh the lane and a bushel of apples hang right over it. Now, can folks in the lane eat my apples? is the question I come to ask ye. 'Cause, if the law says they ain't allowed to, your boys been breaking the law. Here's the cores of the apples they et."

With a sudden gesture of superb simplicity he thrust a spadelike palm beneath the nose of his pastor.

Before the latter, even as Ashbel had said, lay the uneven little cylinders of the devoured fruit.

The moment was a grave one. The enemy and constant scourge of sin was here faced by grievous sin in his own flesh, cancer in the very heart of right, and a witness, a member of his own flock, stood before him.

In an effort to recollect where he had last seen his sons, he parried the thrust, and, bending his fine eyes upon Ashbel, put his faint hope into a question.

"Were these apples, Ashbel, upon the ground in the lane or hanging over the lane upon the tree?"

"They was on the tree, Mr. Ingersoll. Yes, sir, hanging hard and fast."

"Then, Ashbel, my sons have broken the commandment of God and are thieves. These apples"—the gnawed remnants mocked the term—"these cores are the cores of stolen apples, and those who stole them shall be punished as they deserve both by their unhappy father upon this earth and Him who is in heaven. I shall make restitution for the theft." He sought in his pantaloons for coins.

"Nary restitution, Mr. Ingersoll. The apples, hell!" He checked himself as John Ingersoll raised his hand, and his brown face became suddenly like a copper pot, well burnished.

"Begging your pardon. The boys are welcome to 'em. I'd give 'em all the apples they can eat, but the two of 'em had the law so pat that they kinda riled me. The law and them no higher than me britches!" Forgetting himself once more, Ashbel spat. "As for stealing the apples, mebbe they did and mebbe they didn't, but I know they didn't go for to steal anything, and so they ain't thieves as fur as I'm concerned. They had the rights of the thing

all figgered out. Any time they want apples, they kin have 'em fur the asking, always providing they don't throw no law at Ashbel Riggs." He threw the cores into the lane, and an astonishing grin split with a line of white the bronze of his promontoried face.

"Mr. Ingersoll, they be smart boys."

He turned and shambled away, the hide boots creaking in the quiet of the late afternoon.

John Ingersoll stood silent upon his threshold. His heart was exceedingly heavy, for Satan, intent ever upon offices of evil, had placed in his heart a certain agreement with Ashbel's words and sympathy, vile and treasonous in the sight of God, with his sons. True, according to the law, they had stolen, but they had not intended to steal. Nevertheless, they had stolen. They were thieves. "Thou shalt not steal." Heavily he walked into the lane and selected a switch from a clump of willows. He swept and checked its sweeping in the air. A supple, adequate instrument of punishment. Still, the thought did not please him. Gloomily, his wand beneath his arm, his hands clasped behind him, he paced back to his door.

Ebon, having observed from a point of vantage on the chicken-house roof all that had passed between his father and Ashbel, now gloomily communicated his report to his impassive cadet, engaged in dispatching the last of Ashbel's apples carried away in the flight with great presence of mind in Ebon's hat.

"Ashbel's gone and told Father and Father's mad and's got a switch, a thick one. He's gone into the house."

Robin observed indistinctly that Ashbel was a misery and a bearer of tales. He seemed unconcerned, but the

fat little calves of his bare legs troubled him for an instant with premonitory stings. He got upon his feet, and Ebon, descending swiftly, joined him.

"Might's well catch it now's ever."

"Might's well. Who cares for a durn switch, but Father'll talk until supper 'bout babies born to evul and go on off to preach and we won't get any supper and be locked up, me in the cellar where the wood is and you in the closet with Mother's clothes and it's durn dark and skeery."

It was to be even so.

Returning, the beldame of all work told them jocularly that their pa had something for them. What it was she knew full well and took occasion to murmur that, as children should be fed, they would be fed, apples or no apples. She thought but little of the theory that fasting wrought repentance, and confounded it at every opportunity.

As they entered the parlour, Robin's terse prophecy promised to be fully realized. John Ingersoll, his broad back toward them, hands clasped behind him, stood gazing from the window upon the lane, shadowed now, that led to the orchard where the immemorial sin had sprung suddenly and flourished. Sombrely he meditated upon Adam and his corruption and the eternal legacy of his transgression. A subscriber to the Auburn Declaration of 1837 wherein the Presbyterian divines of the new school stated the true doctrines that were henceforth to be believed and disseminated, he reflected that, in accordance with these, Adam was so the head and representative of the race, that, as a consequence of his transgression, all



mankind became morally corrupt and liable to death, temporal and eternal.

Gloomily visionary, even now he beheld his two sons, the children his Mary had borne him, standing in the valley of the everlasting shadow. He supposed vaguely that had Satan himself attended the downfall of his boys, Ashbel could not have failed to see the looping coils of the Tempter as he sped away, for snakes, and especially large snakes, were not common in the region. Strange that Ashbel had not mentioned some tertiary agency concerned in the crime, a sibilance in the quiet of the lane, a sudden swell of burning, brimstone, or sulphur. It was in some fashion an affront unworthy of so skilled a duellist as Lucifer to put upon him, John Ingersoll, who had so often forced the Enemy of Man to break ground and flee, this studied absence of the principal, this delegation of his infernal attack upon less substantial and important seconds. It was a sad satisfaction to know that these lesser devils in all probability were still resident in iniquitous joy in the small persons of his sons, poor babies, who were now in the room with him, all ignorant of such horrid tenantry. Taking the switch with which he would exorcise these creatures, he turned with a suddenness that confirmed his children's darkest forebodings.

"Ebenezer! Robert! It has come to my ears that you have transgressed the commandment of God, that you have stolen. Yielding to the insinuations of evil"—a natural curiosity touching the experience of his sons momentarily suggested his asking in what guise, serpentine or in the rank likeness of a black goat, Evil had made these insinuations, but he denied himself—"you un-

lawfully plucked apples from the tree of Ashbel Riggs, and when reproved you sought to bewilder him with guile placed at your command by Satan. The time has come for me, your father and God's hand in this household . . . .”

Ebon and Robin, their father's diminutive auditors, sighed softly. They would in due time have heard one of John Ingersoll's finest sermons, but, with their minds fixed upon the operation of the switch, now tremulous, now leaping, in their father's clenched right hand, they found their attention too rigidly absorbed to be attendant upon mere words. In the bleak parlour the autumnal twilight shook and was rent by thundering periods, and Lucifer, now surely present in the shadows, made no response. John Ingersoll exhorted and pleaded, accused and condemned. He fell upon his knees between his children and, with his arms about them, spoke all at once in a voice natural, but thick with tears, of the sorrowing agony of their mother at their damnation. He sprang to his feet and, with a hand upon their necks, thrust them upon their brown and shaking knees and commanded them to pray for forgiveness, for the casting out of the devils that were housed within them. The hour of supper passed unheeded, and that of evening service drew on, so that the old woman in the kitchen, trembling in sympathy with the frightened little boys kneeling in the clamant darkness of the parlour, came finally and knocked upon the door.

No one heeded her.

John Ingersoll, his great voice sunk now to a whispering petition to Jehovah, was attacking the quaking devils

in his sons' uneasy interiors. He switched shrewdly and with vigour, but the pain was a relief to the boys. Dealing faithfully with Ebon, he plucked up Robin from the floor and kissed him and then dealt with him no less soundly. The haggard servant without, at the crescendo of sobs that rose suddenly and seemed to shake the door against which she leant, could stand the horror no longer. Knocking once more, she opened the door. The candle which she held shone nervously and seemed to protest against its function. A wave as though of emotion struck it and it wavered so that the blue heart of it grew long and bent now this way now that.

The sobbing was checked as he who sobbed broke the switch between his hands. It was John Ingersoll. Robin and Ebon were weeping, too, but somewhat perfunctorily and largely because their father wept. They all wept together. The woman announced the hour, adding that the flock must be already gathered together and awaiting its pastor, and John Ingersoll, seizing his papers, strode by her and out into the night. In his haste and his emotion he had forgotten the sequels to the punishment of his sons. Fasting and closet durance he had said no word of. At the thought Ebon and Robin became instantly cheered and the beldame hilarious. Her ancient nerves, strung so tightly but a few minutes before, slackened instantly and too swiftly for decorum.

"All them goin's-on fur a passel of sour apples. A-botherin' God and a-scarin' babies on account of Ashbel Riggs!" She hurried them into the warm kitchen.

"Your father is a good man. He's a good, good man,



and what's more, what's even better, he's a handsome man, a fine big figure of a man," she observed to his sons. "He's too good a man! He's forever wasting God's time and his own with words and hullyballoos. Now, what he needs, though don't be telling it to him, is a quartern of rum and a pipe and a fine big woman to hold his hand for him. Don't be telling it to him, but just such a fine big woman as I used to be meself." The thought evoked from her a startling squawk of profane mirth, and Ebon and Robin, aware somewhat dimly that there was wit afoot, laughed, too, their eyes solemnly intent upon the succulencies before them.

The children ate, and later, with a resumption of their habitual courtesy, listened to a variation upon Sarah's unique reminiscence which dealt with a girlhood in Jefferson County when the wild miles that made it were not called Jefferson County and were teeming with a homesick English soldiery and undocile Mohawks. An old tale, it had gained much in the process of telling, and the wealth of imagination that had come to be expended upon it excited its hearers almost as much as its narrator, but, as a rule, just when a bloody and rum-soaked warrior was upon the point of ravishing the lovely maiden Sarah, the aged woman would diverge into unholy estimates of all men and shortly after fall into slumber.

But not even Mrs. Katherine had created more admirable cookies. Having eaten several, the memory of past trials faded, and, but for the definite reminder of the welts upon their legs, Ebon and Robin would have thought no more upon them. When Sarah had reached

the accustomed climax of her narrative and sat nodding in her chair, they arose sleepily and proceeded to bed. They were sleepy but their minds were still active upon a familiar point of doctrine repeated that night by their father. Why, in causing babies to be born, did the Omnipotent God cause them to be born to evil?

### CHAPTER III

WHEN Robin was seven and Ebon nine years old, their father once again received a call to leave the fields where he had sown salvation and go forth into unenlightened spaces. Sarah, whose admirable qualities for the gathering of news and all gossip in Belleville were always in operation, caught the tidings of the pastor's decision almost before John Ingersoll had made it. Driving a new and bushy broom vigorously without the parlour door, she had lent an ear, amiably accustomed to such practice, to the conference within and from the phrases of regret that fell in measured cadences from the lips of Elder Jared Tuckerman, she had gleaned her information. Though John Ingersoll's conversation with Jared took place at nearly noon, Sarah had amplified and disseminated its substance by evening service tide, so that his flock that night astonished their pastor with their attention and emotion. As he made no mention of his planned departure from the pulpit, this zeal astonished him. Truly, he had wrought of this congregation a noble regiment for Jehovah, and as he invoked in their behalf the valedictory blessing, it was in his heart to recall his resignation. He returned home thoughtfully to surprise his knowledgeable housekeeper and maidservant still spreading the news to those disaffected citizens who were not Presbyterians. She faced quite an assembly and was making very good talk of it.

"He's goin' out, that good, good man, to preach to the bloody savages what ud lift the hair off his head and more'n likely his head off with it as soon as eat. And help me Heaven, what is it they eat but Christian babies, and him with two children no more than weaned."

A dispersal of the outer fringe of her audience distracted her attention, and she perceived a bulk the magnitude of which possessed no equals in Belleville. Taken unawares, she uttered a distressful squawk and recognized unhappily that her auditors had left her so suddenly as to make her own retreat too noticeable to be respectful. John Ingersoll considered her with amazement. For stridulence, the woman was a hunting horn. Opening his gate, he remarked in a chest tone of splendid resonance:

"Sarah, you talk too much."

The woman wavered away into the dusk.

"And too loudly. Much too loudly."

Entering the parlour, he reflected a little sadly that Sarah's blamable garrulity had probably made a reconsideration of his decision impossible, as there were praters in the township who, being enemies of his, would attribute his remaining in the comparative civilization of Jefferson County to a fear of malignant Indians. The thought of these pleased him all at once. There was much good work to be done among Indians, and it was regrettable that so many carriers of the contagion of Rome had preceded the men of his own faith into such a field. When he had received word from the elders of the Presbyterian Church of Oberlin in Ohio, it had not occurred to him that the conversion of heathen, the truly heathen, might be included in his offices. Prior to his retirement this eve-

ning he would attune a little his spirit to such a task by dipping into Sibbe whose *Believers' Bowels Opened* contained much that might be valuable and expedient for missionaries. Searching, his candle aloft and flickering, through the dark shelves tenanted sombrely by drab and unlovely bindings, he found and took the volume down, leaving a gap between Jenkyn's *Upon the Atonement* and the fat and direfully illustrated work of Fox. These three tomes, with Milner's *History of the Waldenses*, Vahn's *Archeology of the Jews*, and Baxter's *Saint's Everlasting Rest*, were the only textbooks of his sons. In the prosecution of their education it was his theory and practice that the subjects must be supervised and if necessary forced to imbibe learning, for children, inclined naturally toward evil, would otherwise hold it in no esteem and ignore it, to their eventual damnation.

To his sorrow, but not to his surprise, Ebon and Robin paid no reverence to Sibbe, valued in Fox only the illustrations, and avoided assiduously and without shame the great work of Richard Baxter upon *The Saint's Everlasting Rest*. The volumes of William Paley, D. D., they had not yet been given, for John Ingersoll possessed certain doubts about Paley, his dedications, for instance, which savoured somewhat of patronage and prelacy, and a certain sentence to be found in his *Moral and Political Philosophy* which read, "virtue itself offends when coupled with forbidding manners." What a doctrine was here! The father, becoming aware of his sons' nascent powers of logic, could well imagine their questions concerning this, for even John Ingersoll admitted to himself that the manners of Jehovah according to the Testament not un-

seldom had been forbidding. Paley, therefore, had been placed temporarily within the pastor's expurgatory index, though unquestionably there was much sound meat in him. But touching the daily consumption of the rest, he was adamant in his intention, and he had devised a sure method for his sons' successful schooling. Ebon, furnished with Baxter and a candle a few inches in length, was locked securely in the cellar, and Robin, with Sibbe and his allotted length of taper, was inclosed in a bedroom closet. The candles lit, the little boys were advised that, by the time these guttered away into extinction, certain portions of their authors had to be learnt by heart, else they would continue to sit in unwelcome blackness to expiate the sin of idleness. It was John Ingersoll's experience that the practice of this method was eminently successful.

Opening the work of Sibbe, he set himself to read. In the early dawn there still gleamed in his study the orange shell of his candlelight.

The morrow brought all manner of excitements. Sarah was set to packing the Pastor's unextensive wardrobe and the little boys, relieved of their duties with Baxter and Sibbe, were dispatched upon errands as solemn men and women, heavy with worthy gravity, invested the parlour with restrained and pious lamentation. These Ebon and Robin avoided as, like the atmosphere of the parlour, they went but ill with the sunlight and the budding orchards. The children perceived a great feeling of holiday-making in the world about them. Ashbel Riggs, tentatively prodding peaches in a corner of his orchard, was bawling a song as they passed by. Catching sight of them,



he plucked two that seemed of a fitting bloom and tenderness and gesticulated. Ebon and Robin halted and eyed him gravely. Since the episode of the apples they had treated Ashbel with reserve, and the farmer, conscious of a guiltiness in having played the bearer of tales, had anxiously sought to make all smooth again.

"Look-a here."

There was hilarity in his bellow and the intimation of a jocund confidence to be made, but beneath it all, too, a quaver of pleading.

"Peaches," observed the brothers to each other, and a serenity fell upon their faces, but they did not unbend.

"Yes, sir, one for each of you. A mite young yet and hard, but I'll lay, sweet as nuts."

The fruit, extended in his open palms, seemed to twinkle at them in brown and light yellow and red. Their charming fuzzy skins seemed hardly thick enough to contain the juice that was in them. Robin and Ebon looked and swallowed, and the former, averting his eyes, inquired cautiously:

"You giving them to us, Mr. Riggs?"

"Yes, sir, I am. I like you two boys, and many's the time I've told your dad so."

Having here skillfully laid a ghost, he burnished with great tenderness first one and then the other peach upon his sleeve, a gesture which gave the sole cue to his nervousness. "Pshaw, look there, I've rubbed all their little whiskers off." He extended them once more with an almost frantic goodwill.

The boys capitulated in unison.

"Thank you a lot, Mr. Riggs." The peaches passed

rapidly out of existence, and the morning seemed to distil a nobler fragrance as Ashbel, restored to sound gaiety, discoursed on crops and youth, the advantages of having a godly father, and the cussedness of Sarah. His hearers, now concentrating upon the barren centres of the fruit, paid a somewhat faulty attention, but at the mention of the eccentric housekeeper, they lent an ear. It brought the excitement of the hour back into their minds. Deeming Ashbel ripe for the tidings, they imparted them, adding, not without a thrill apiece, that where they were going there were Indians whose fare was Christian babies. Ashbel heard them in astounded silence. He had been in Ohio thirty years before where, as a boy, he had spent many fearful days awaiting the outcome of Tecumseh's last campaign, and he had talked with one or two of those poor few who had escaped from the shambles of the river Raisin on the day of Proctor's perfidy. It was in Ashbel's mind a question as to which had been the more treacherously savage, Tecumseh's warriors or Proctor's British, but, in either case, Ohio to him connoted many methods of violent death, all prevalent and painful. Still, he had heard that all was changed there now, and indeed he knew men who had been and meant to go again and who spoke of fertile soil and great increase. Indians, he had understood from these, had moved westward unlamented, though as to this who could tell, witness the Blackhawk business and more than one stout lad who had left Belleville for Columbus and prosperity and had never again been heard from. Pensively, he regarded the eager brethren.



"Indians, hey? Who would it be, now, who spoke that way about Indians?"

"Sarah!"

There was a confidence in this proof of the veracity of the tale that for an instant checked the relieved laughter upon his lips.

"Sarah! the old bag of mischief. What in tarnation does she know about Indians who ain't been out of this here township since she was knee high to a grasshopper and she claiming Chief Joe Brant tried to tumble her and who ever heard the beat of that, near sixty years ago. Don't you two set any store by them tales she tells, 'cause you'll do yourselves a mischief trying to believe her. You'll swell up and go hence, sudden, with the strain. If Sarah says there's Indians in Ohio, there ain't."

A gloom fell upon the children.

"Father says if it's God's will there's going to be," observed Robin finally, but there was no conviction in his tone. He had an uneasy feeling that Father had been as trusting as himself, and he was a little ashamed for him. Robin added that, anyway, Sarah made good pies. Ashbel rose.

"Whatsoever, it's near noon, and all this time the sun's been a-licking at them peaches." He secured two more, and thrusting them upon his companions, he left them without further remarks. He regretted somewhat his vehemence touching Sarah's narratives. When the old girl, he reflected uneasily, set about taking away a man's character and good name, she put her mind on it and did it thoroughly, truth or no truth. It might be that Ebon

and Robin would exercise the discretion that, he was convinced, they were possessed of, but against the artillery of blandishments which lay at her disposal, the cakes, the pies, the cookies enriched with nuts and raisins, it was more than probable that Sarah would find no defense.

As he made his way up the lane and was upon the point of regaining his own land, he observed, not without trepidation, that the woman, bearing packages, was issuing from the Ingersoll garden. At a distance of some yards, she broke into cries.

"I seen you talking to my boys, Ashbel. If you've been a-sowing lies and such in innocent ears, I'll make yours burn like bacon fat, Ashbel Riggs."

The farmer took his wall in his stride, and safe among his tree trunks waggled a deprecatory hand.

"Don't you, Sarah, don't you. All we did, we et a peach apiece."

Making off, he hazarded a last attempt at the assertion of his masculinity. "You let me be," he shouted, but the noise lacked authority.

Sarah flushed the boys like quail. Deep in the grass, they were putting an end to the second gift of peaches, and arose suddenly before her so that she squeaked shrilly and dropped her bundles.

"Your pa wants ye both, so go on and don't be lying around skeering quality to death."

Ebon and Robin had had commissions to execute, but gratefully they dismissed them from their minds. Both desired to apprise their father of the lack of convertible savages in Ohio, lest touching them he betray an innocence that might shame them all. They found John

Ingersoll upon his doorstep towering like a mountain peak capped with silver above his departing visitors. He bade them all farewell and briefly petitioned a blessing of Jehovah for their welfare. There was a genuine and splendid dignity about the pastor that wrought in his sons' habituated concepts of their father an admiration thoroughly impersonal, as though he were a stranger come upon suddenly in an act of grave and touching courtesy. They paused as the men and women, the former sombre, the latter unappealingly tearful, seemed to beat about their father like a flight of dark-plumaged birds about a lone, uncompromising crag. These left, and the crag, touched a little with a soft sunlight, seemed less relentless.

"Sons, we'll lunch and then away into the wilderness. All is packed and the road waits."

He smiled so that the accustomed armoured gravity of his expression was broken and dispelled. He looked scarce older than his sons.

"The God of Moses and of Aaron leads us."

## CHAPTER IV

THERE were, after all, no Indians to speak of in Oberlin, Ohio, and none that offered themselves for conversion. John Ingersoll and his sons arrived when the summer was dying, after a journey filled with minor adventures, dirt, and bad food, a journey valiantly prosecuted in the name of Jehovah and worthy of a nobler ending. Ebon and Robin looked upon Oberlin for the first time without enthusiasm and without surprise that its inconsiderable and sprawling bulk contained no blanketed aborigines waiting to hearken to the words, planned and well prepared, of their father. Ashbel had been right. Sarah had lied about Ohio, and, from the fullness of their experience of travel, the little boys now recalled the imaginative crone with kindly contempt as who should say "poor creature, how could she know any better."

By post road and canal, the pastor and his sons had made the best of a hot and dusty way to Albany, and from Albany they had fared again westward to Buffalo by the means of a steam train which at first glance had seemed to the children not unlike a certain manifestation of Satan as described to them by their father. After the first astonishing belches and alarming clangings, however, the locomotive had amused them, and they had descended at stations to watch it smoke and listen to it breathe while the man who commanded its destinies drank whisky and hummed a song then popular, the words of which Robin,

musically inclined, committed to memory. It had dealt with one called old Tippecanoe, and they had learnt with some pride that this personage was a resident of the state toward which they were travelling, so they became Whigs upon the spot, thinking vaguely that General Harrison would hear of it and, feeling comforted, would welcome them to Ohio. In Buffalo, John Ingersoll had been much set upon and irritated by a fellow traveller who professed himself a Millerite and whose earnest intention it was to prepare the pastor for the coming of the Lord which was to take place three years hence. This man spoke continually and tediously, and even suggested opening his portmanteau that his travelling companions might examine his ascension robes and be thereby edified and convinced. William Miller, he averred, surpassed Isaiah as a prophet, at which iniquitous statement John Ingersoll could brook him no longer.

"Sir," he thundered, "you blaspheme!" The Millerite had felt a grip of steel upon his shoulder and had found himself gazing with both his eyes into one black pupil that dwindled and expanded and seemed to ripple and gleam like a lake of fire. Appalled, he had cringed, in his mind a great and sudden uncertainty as to all creeds and beliefs. Certainly, his presence at the Divine Arrival seemed for an instant extremely problematical.

"Go a-whoring after what strange gods you will, but cease to pollute my ears and the ears of my children with these infamies, or I will thrust you forcibly out of this hotel and see to it that you do not return."

The Millerite had fallen a-trembling and had gone



betimes away, nor had the Ingersolls seen him upon the steamboat that had carried them to Cleveland. The steamboat, too, had been a source of infinite satisfaction to the children. Its magnificence was such that they spent hours raptly considering the notable paintings in its long central dining saloon, the lavish ornamentation of the ceiling, and the carpet, thick and soft as marsh turf, that gave unctuously beneath their feet. There was on deck a great representation of an eagle, carved in wood, that held clutched in its talons a bell that rang continually, and when it rang men rushed hither and thither and the whole boat shook thunderously and vented an unsubstantial smoke that hissed as it planed along the water.

They sailed early upon a Saturday morning, and later in the day a tall gentleman in a dark and modish coat and pantaloons of a delicate buff, about whose neck was a neckcloth of saffron embroidered with strawberries, appeared upon the deck carrying a game cock in his arms. He spoke at length and with smooth insinuation to the captain and to other gentlemen elegant as himself. A barnyard cock was thereupon furnished from a crate among the cargo, and silver and even a little gold clinked as it passed from hand to hand.

Ebon and Robin were speechless with excitement as the two birds, the one slender, taut, its neck almost serpentine, the other as bluff and sturdy as a cock upon a weather vane, were placed beak to beak upon the deck. One crouched, the other strutted a little, filled with a silly pride. The gentleman in the buff pantaloons clicked his tongue and smiled. Ruffs appeared to frame the truculent extended heads, and the game cock flew suddenly into the

air, striking with its spurless heels. Its opponent met it in flight, and, unused to warring save to protect the honour of its seraglio, used beak and bulk but not the horny unshorn spurs upon its legs.

The audience shouted as the mercenary crumpled upon the deck, vanquished by the ruffling poundage of the amateur, but the gentleman in the buff pantaloons still smiled. After a little time, he picked up his bird and observed amiably that the first match of the main, if so he might be permitted to term this single combat, went to the ship's cock, but now it was his suggestion that both birds be heeled and a proper fight made of it. Ebon and Robin, heart and soul for the familiar bird, watched the heeling with misgiving. "Short heels," the owner of the game cock said, and drew them forthwith from a pocket. The steel spurs, sharp as razors and an inch and a half long, seemed to rob the occasion of its geniality. Robin was of two minds whether or not to stay, since it was his conviction that blood would be spilt, a horrid sight that much shook him.

Armed, the cocks were again placed beak to beak. This time the professional soared and struck with dreadful effect. Its opponent, bewildered, poor rustic, by the appendages upon its legs, seemed hardly to rise at all and toppled over with a great spurt of blood darkening the plumage of its neck. Robin, pale as ashes, detached himself from the circle and ran below. The gentleman in the buff pantaloons remarked to the company at large that that was your fighting Claiborne and that not Bellyse or Joe Gilliver himself had bred or trained a better bird. Sundry onlookers smiled shamefacedly as the captain

passed their coins to the speaker, while still another lifted the fallen warrior from the little pool that was darkening the deck. Its eye, glazing slowly, seemed filled with a pathetic astonishment at what had befallen it, and it uttered half-plaintive, half-angry cluckings of bewildered reproach.

"Dead?" blandly inquired the owner of the game cock, and on receiving a negative answer suggested that the match be carried to a finish. "Breast to breast," he directed, but before this could be done, John Ingersoll, towering above the little ring, in his wake the panting Robin, thrust through and picked up the bleeding representative of the barnyard.

"My bird, gentlemen," he said, and there was a naked challenge in his voice.

"Oh, I believe not, sir," said the captain blandly, but his eye was uneasy. The gentleman in the buff pantaloons, his face a mask, had dropped a hand to his waistband. In the rear a round little man in a damaged beaver suddenly and querulously gave tongue.

"Yes, it is, too, his. It was mine, and being shipped to Cleveland, but I sold it to the gentleman there." He might have added, for an outrageous sum. The captain relaxed.

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Ingersoll," he said, and becoming violently businesslike, bellowed an order to one of his hands, who jumped and fled forward. The owner of the game cock assumed an easier pose and smiled with his mouth, but his eyes remained still and lustreless.

"A dead bird, anyway," he observed, and fell to removing the knives from his fighter's legs.



John Ingersoll, his cock in his arms, was staunching with his handkerchief the wound in its neck.

"No," he said reflectively. "No. Only a flesh wound, fortunately, a slight one. And friend"—his voice, soft before, became suddenly like liquid steel—"if you were to draw your derringer upon me, I would break you in three pieces before you could pull the trigger. That is," he added, "if you did not shoot from behind as I greatly suspect you would."

The gentleman in the buff pantaloons became as yellow as cheese. His hand flew once more to his waistband, and the company disbanded swiftly, leaving the two men not more than a foot apart.

"See," continued John Ingersoll, "I could break your arm as I could a twig." As if in a vise, the owner of the game cock found himself held immovable.

The captain, relief luminous upon his face, bounced forward. "No more, gentlemen, I beg you both. Only a little sport, Mr. Ingersoll, and I'm sure Mr. Yancy meant no more. Come, shake hands, and let us bury the incident."

John Ingersoll remarked calmly, "At your service, Captain, providing Mr. Yancy deposits his pocket pistol this moment with you, and leaves it with you until we reach Cleveland."

Mr. Yancy grinned quite horribly. "Why, bless me, sir, I never knew you carried one," said the captain with an admirable simulation of surprise, and took the handsome little weapon in his hand.

"Captain, there are honest men aboard who, should any accident happen to me, will surely testify to this en-

counter and to your wardship of that pistol. A good-day to you," and releasing Mr. Yancy, John Ingersoll went below with his purchase all ruffled and feebly protesting in his arms.

Robin and Ebon brought up the rear strutting like drum majors, their father's valour drifting in aureoles about their heads. They were given the custody of the cock, which shortly resumed its strength and which was replaced in its crate with a number of its wives until Cleveland was reached. The incident was forgotten aboard the boat, though the elegant gentlemen who whiled away the hours of the journey at cards saluted John Ingersoll respectfully when later they encountered him, and even Mr. Yancy offered his greetings, which were most courteously received and responded to. These gentlemen were not to be found all day Sunday, and it was Robin's charitable belief that they spent the entire day at devotional exercise in their cabins, an idea fostered by the fact that such was the Sabbath routine of Ebon and himself. But Sunday evening, after the sun had gone down into the western reaches of Lake Erie, the brothers, occupied in running about the deck to exhaust the exuberance pent during the daylight hours, ran by the captain's cabin. The door was ajar, doubtless to permit the lake breeze to sweep the room of cheroot smoke. The elegant gentlemen, including Mr. Yancy and the captain, in their shirt sleeves, a condition which disclosed fine linen only upon their shirt fronts, were seated about a table on which cards and coins and several bottles disputed for position. Barred by rule from gaming in the saloon upon the Sabbath, they had congregated here. Robin and his brother gazed

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upon this scene with astonishment and waited hopefully for a minute for Death, flanked by Satan, to strike the company as it sat. As it still sat and continued merry and in health, they went below puzzled and a little disappointed.

The journey to Cleveland proved, all in all, a great adventure for the boys, and when they reached that town on Monday night, they were exhausted with sensations. At Erie, where the boat had touched and lain for a few hours, they had seen two men fighting with short knives upon the wharf, a dirty red kerchief connecting their left hands. The elegant gentlemen had offered and taken bets upon this conflict, voted infinitely more exciting than a cockfight, and had been inclined to boo the loser who, all ripped and bloody, had finally staggered away, his hands about his stomach. Robin had watched only for a short time under the impression that the men were playing, but on seeing the blade of one of the combatants disappear in the region of the other's belt, he had gone away swiftly to engage his father to stop this iniquity as he had stopped the cockfight. John Ingersoll, however, arrived too late, and Mr. Yancy smiled his joyless smile when he reached the deck.

In Cleveland, they had spent the night in a superb hotel, the Franklyn, and had driven out early the next morning between luxurious little villas into a rugged and undocile country. At a tavern in a tiny hamlet named Elyria, they had lunched and marvelled at bullet holes which the tavern keeper displayed as relics of Tecumseh's hostility, and at moonrise they had reached Oberlin with its gloomy college surrounded by a handful of habitations.

After Albany, Buffalo, and Cleveland, it seemed to Ebon and Robin but a dreary little pocket of the world, and they were depressed and tired and bitterly disappointed when they had finally got to bed in the four-room frame house in which they were to live. Even John Ingersoll himself was a little downcast when next morning he was formally received by the professors of Oberlin College, who explained to him that he was to have no permanent pulpit, but was to be encouraged to preach here and there about the country, upon occasions, perhaps, to travel as far as Kentucky. His inquiries as to the field of conversion of Indians met with no encouragement whatever. It seemed that these had deserted Oberlin incontinently and in their new retreats did not favour white men, zealously well intentioned as the white men might be. More and more John Ingersoll regretted Belleville and the Presbyterians of Jefferson County. He returned to find Ebon and Robin and the rooster, carried in a string bag from Cleveland, gloomily occupying the doorstep of his somewhat shabby home. Their gloom was so evident that he unbent a little, and when all three cocked a hopeless eye upward as he approached, he smiled and made a jest or two.

"And what, my sons, do you think of Oberlin?" he continued when his sons' dreary laughter had subsided. The rooster had made no appreciative sounds whatever. His sons hesitated.

"There are no Indians, Father," ventured Robin finally, a natural caution withholding more violent and less laudable objections. John Ingersoll's brow became once again clouded.

"That is true, Robin, but doubtless there is yield to be gathered and stubble to be burnt none the less. Remember, my son, that in every place there are souls to be saved."

He passed on into the house, but his words left behind him no suspicion of cheer in his children. Sombrely they continued to sit with the rooster between them and the meagre possibilities of Oberlin stark before their eyes.

Upon the following Sabbath, John Ingersoll preached to the inhabitants of the settlement and the learned gentry of Oberlin College. His sermon was a fine one, an attack, filled with superb crescendos of accusation, against slavery and the owners of slaves, and it was noticeable that upon its conclusion several of the congregation arose and left the church without waiting to congratulate or in any way salute the preacher. Upon the faces of the congregation, in fact, had sat throughout the discourse expressions of mingled alarm and admiration, and the pastor, descending from the pulpit, had found his elders assembled in a group disorganized by debate. At his approach they had fallen silent, but one among them, a professor in the college, had come forward and begged a minute's urgent conversation. He feared, he said, that such observations and sentiments as had that morning been uttered by Mr. Ingersoll might not judiciously be repeated, and he begged that in the future, if future after this blunder there proved to be for Mr. Ingersoll in Oberlin, Mr. Ingersoll would rigidly refrain from attacking an institution indorsed and encouraged by the Founders of the Nation, George Washington and Thomas Jefferson, besides divers other gentlemen of note at that



time engaged in Washington in providing for the settlement and salvation of the West. Niggers, he added were niggers——

John Ingersoll clove his sentence at the word and, bending a little so that his eyes might be upon a level with those of his admonisher, recalled a reverberating fragment of his sermon.

“No man shall speak disrespectfully of Negroes in my presence. They, as we, are the children of God and as such merit neither disrespect nor brutality at our hands nor from our tongues.”

The professor shrank a little within himself, and the group at his back bent like standing wheat before the sweep of a prairie wind. The pastor passed on, the habitual grimness of his visage deep in the furrows about brow and mouth. None better than he knew that the old evil was afoot again, the tyranny that had impelled his departure from Hanover, from Dresden, from Cazenovia, from Hampton and from Belleville, all in the space of seven years, against which he never ceased to war. The times were hard, and his salary, even when regularly remitted to him, never exceeded two hundred dollars a year, but his principles remained inviolate and intact, though, besides Ebon and Robin, he was straining every resource to educate John at Yale and support Mary Jane, his eldest child, in comfort. John, indeed, received the lion's share of the advantages afforded by the father, and John Ingersoll, Senior, had hoped that in Oberlin he might find a tolerance as yet unknown in the East and be thereby enabled to prosecute in peace the education of his favourite son. As he reached his gate, he realized



that the chances were but slight of preaching again to an Oberlin congregation, and that he must travel on again who had but barely arrived. To his own surprise, he felt no great despair. There were in Oberlin, he reflected, neither Indians nor Christians to be converted, the one were physically inaccessible, the other mentally and spiritually so. He had heard that in Ashtabula, the Reverend Robert H. Conkling, pastor of the Presbyterian church of that town, was resigning. It might be that there he would find a permanent office as the departing pastor's successor. He would upon the morrow submit his application, sending it by the Cleveland coach that two days a week, on Mondays and on Thursdays, took the road north and east. He reflected with a little smile that here was a plan that would find favour in the ears of his household.

The week, however, passed without the expected dismissal from the Oberlin elders, and upon the Sabbath John Ingersoll mounted again into the high pulpit. He perceived grimly that a certain smugness shone dully upon the upraised faces below him, and he girded up his loins in consequence.

"Slavery," he roared so suddenly that the congregation leapt in their seats, "slavery is an abomination and an iniquity, and it shall not be forgiven them who nourish and sustain it."

Dismay and passion ran hand in hand about the church at his feet, but he smote and continued to smite until two hours had passed and the substance of his sermon was exhausted. The congregation fled all ways as he ended and was nowhere to be seen as he regained the street.

There were, however, three of his elders awaiting him, and among them the spokesman of the previous Sunday. The latter made a swift advance but one that hinted in some strange way of a retreat to be made as swiftly and with a finer enthusiasm. His eyes fixed upon John Ingersoll's black cravat, he delivered a brief valediction the phrasing of which seemed to cause him some embarrassment. It was as if he had rejected a planned series of remarks and was improvising, not without qualms. The pastor heard him with a flawless equanimity.

"Gentlemen," he said, when the other had made an unpolished end, "there is in you all one evil, the evil, the rotten evil, of moral cowardice. There may flourish in you other evils and I doubt not but that there do, but this matter of moral cowardice I perceive emblazoned upon your faces to your shame and eventual damnation. It affords me great pleasure, gentlemen, to bid you good-day and good-bye." He made his way home to find his appointment to the vacant pulpit in Ashtabula awaiting him, sent by special messenger in the early hours.

Next day found Ebon and Robin and the rooster beneath his eye in the northeastward faring coach. There had been no one abroad in Oberlin to see them go, but the lack of the God-speed-you grieved them little. As the horses took the bit in their mouths and the light lash upon their flanks, the Ingersolls looked not once behind them.

## CHAPTER V

ASHTABULA in comparison with Oberlin proved almost a metropolis. Though its inhabitants numbered scarce more than a thousand souls, these seemed all to be abroad and active when John Ingersoll and his sons with their rooster dismounted from the coach that had brought them thither and were met by the elders of the town's Presbyterian church. Ebon and Robin considered with approval the activity that bustled in the sunlight about them, and with no less esteem than their father's remarked the house and generous garden that had been selected for their habitation. Facing the wide and dusty street, it presented its porched and trellised back to grounds filled equally with flowers and vegetables and that terminated in a sharp declivity at the foot of which, one hundred and fifty feet below, ran the Ashtabula River, sleepily and, save in times of spate, quite harmlessly. The house itself was of more consequence than any in which they had so far resided, and John Ingersoll, examining the rooms and the kitchen, a large one fit for splendid cookery, perceived that here were no quarters to be ruled and kept in order by a widower with small children. A housewife was grievously lacking, one unlike the dames who had, since his wife's death, kept his household swept and ordered, one who would invest his home with a more spouselike cheer.

He banished the thought from his mind, but it lingered

stubbornly. His sons, at first unused to this domestic spaciousness, grew soon accustomed to it and found it adventurous. There was an attic where the ribs of the house might be seen and examined, and dusty corners beneath the roof that held mystery tethered in cobwebs. There was even an unused passage that, ending suddenly behind a bedroom, had been boarded up at its entrance, but Robin had loosened and removed two of the planks so that he had at his rapt disposal a little chamber without purpose save for the hatching of plots and conspiracies. Their home promised famously for the little boys, but the garden at its back was destined to hamper greatly their enjoyment of it. This garden John Ingersoll had many plans for, and having put them into execution, weeded paths and lawn and organized separately flowers and vegetables, it was his intention to leave the maintenance of all this to the care and labours of his sons. Upon alternate days, Ebon and Robin were set to watch and weed, and no good came of it for them if rank growth flourished or if aught were destroyed. It was Robin's particular misfortune upon the days of his guardianship to be singled out for persecution by the cow belonging to Mr. John P. Robertson, teacher of the Sunday school in John Ingersoll's church. This gentleman, whose residence was closely adjacent, was much of the time about his business in the town and was therefore unable to govern the movements of his cow, an animal prone to travel and to resist generally friendly supervision. It was her custom about every day or two to hazard a foray into the green and pleasant spaces that lay beyond her rightful boundary, and there existed as a rule none to deny her ingress there

save a small round boy who had hitherto only succeeded in distracting her attention from the work in hand until after she had eaten her not modest fill of blossoms and young vegetables.

Upon a day when Robin had been expressly charged to refuse her entrance lest his father whip him severely, for at eight years he was considered mature for the rod and too old for the penance of the dark closet, Mr. Robertson's cow experienced the familiar desire for change and a new diet. Making gentle and contented moan she took her way toward the Ingersoll property, her eyes beautifully luminous with anticipation. Robin, at sentry-go with a rake handle, beheld her approach with bitterness. Ordinarily, he would have liked this cow and thought twice before inflicting suffering upon her, but her continued infractions of both the laws of man and of courtesy were iniquitous and unpardonable. He gave one or two sharp cries of warning, but she continued to approach, wearing about her brow and horns a coronal of greenery tentatively looked into and unconsciously retained as she paced, all of which gave her an air of holiday-making that Robin found doubly affronting. A clod of fresh-turned soil bursting upon her flank lessened her progress not a whit and, gaining the lawn, she proceeded meditatively toward the rear of the house, snuffing appreciatively as she went.

This was too much. Swiftly discharging another handful of clods, Robin gripped his rake handle and, with a howl, whacked her bony rear until she broke into a trot and then a gallop, but she refused to alter her course, which led still to the vegetables along the edge of the gar-



den that looked upon the river. She was annoyed and somewhat astonished by the whackings, but she had no reason to believe that they would continue, and her lunch she meant to make. Noisily the twain passed from sight of the street, and at last, almost beyond the periphery of the foodstuffs which she sought, Mr. Robertson's cow turned at bay.

Robin drawing up into position immediately facing her, the antagonists glared eye to eye, but while the trespasser's mind was concentrated upon one thing only, evasion and the consumption thereafter of what grew at her feet, Robin's was split asunder with thoughts of what harm she had wrought in her passage to the spot where she now made her stand and of the whipping which was indubitably in store for him. Perhaps aware of this, the cow swung her head to the right and then, guilefully and with a great snorting, galloped away to the left along the rim of the garden. Misled by the feint, Robin followed an instant later, belling like a hound and whacking at every leap, but an unevenness in that once ordered and now ravaged terrain caught his foot and he fell upon his face among the trampled plants.

When he rose, Mr. Robertson's cow had disappeared. There had been no sound, no warning of the tragic end that must have befallen her, but she was gone as though the offended garden had opened and engulfed her, hooves, horns, coronal, and all. Stiff with a horrid fright, Robin ran to the rim of the land and stood mute and frozen, looking below. Plunging to destruction and death by drowning, was rolling with incredible speed what had once been his trespassing quarry, but what now more resembled a



great sausage furnished with a multiplicity of horns and legs and frenzied tails.

For a moment, Robin stood gazing at this process of terrible rotation; then turned and ran. Thoughts far more terrible now than those that had dwelt on a garden mutilated and a painful paternal correction filled his mind. For this he might be jailed, perhaps branded forever, as the murderer of Mr. Robertson's cow, and his society shunned and mocked at by the world. What bootied the destruction of a cabbage here and there compared to this slaughter of a valuable animal, at worst stubborn, which had been intent only upon the gratification of its appetite?

Panting, Robin reached the shoulder of the bluff upon the top of which grew the garden. Summoning all his courage to face the bloody pulp that must lie upon its farther side, provided that the river had not received the remains, he rounded the spur. Above him, one hundred and fifty feet or more, lay his father's garden, and the sharp slope that led up to it was redly scarred by what had hideously sped that way. At the foot of this and not eight feet distant from him stood Mr. Robertson's cow, browsing reflectively upon the weeds that grew from the margin of the Ashtabula River. She was dusty and her verdant headgear was no more, but for the rest she was sound in mind and body and she relished what she was eating. She observed Robin with calm, and indeed in her handsome eyes seemed to shine the soft light of forgiveness. Silently Robin turned away. Here was a miracle, and it became him not to question further into its operation. None the less, John Ingersoll, upon his return, remarked

the wounds that gaped in his treasured beds as he walked that even in his garden, and he beat his son. Wilful naughtiness was here and he laboured sincerely to correct it. A stubborn man in the performance of duty, he would listen to no explanations, a fact which Robin deeply though silently resented.

John Ingersoll, while his sons were attending classes conducted by Mr. Robertson, the owner of this same cow, and patrolling his garden, was in the meantime seriously concerned with problems of greater import in his life than these. The thought that his mind had borne when he had first come to Ashtabula and considered the home that was to be his in the town had returned to his mind much increased in strength and influence. He was not, essentially, a uxorious man, but he was, nevertheless, one who had much depended upon his wife in her lifetime, and her death had left him like a ship rudderless in an unknown sea, dependent upon makeshift appliances for direction and faulty devices for the assurance of headway and progress. Loyalty to the memory of Mary, his wife, had held him for six years a widower whose hearth, unblessed by a womanly presence, had come to hold for him no manner of felicity. He needed a woman about him and his home who would do more than look to his mere bodily comforts and desires. He wanted someone who in his dark moments of depression might give him encouragement and sympathy, inspire him and strengthen him to continue a work which held at best but few rewards in this world, regardless of the benefits that it might heap up for him in the next. He wished, though he condemned himself for it, to marry again, and God, apparently ap-

proving, had placed in his path just such a one as would give him those things that he desired. She was a worthy woman, a widow with several children, comely, a good housewife, a mate to be loved and relied upon. She was, most certainly, willing and even anxious to remarry, provided that she might secure her choice, which was, as it had been that of many other women, John Ingersoll, the pastor. She remarked, not without exultation, that the sternly handsome face of the latter became less stern and even relaxed into a smile when she curtsied at his passing, and that his visits among his parishioners led him more often by her door and not unseldom into her swept and garished parlour than was, perhaps, quite necessary. As the months went by, these visits seemed all to terminate with a dish of hyson from her blossom-painted teapot, and the pastor, his high hat brim upward beside his chair upon her pretty rug, speaking with a fine and dignified pathos of a certain loneliness that had beset him of late and a longing for a sweeter, a gentler, influence in his home. The widow foresaw with a placid confidence the inevitable. John Ingersoll called one day and asked her to be his wife, and a week later they were married, of the two households one being made, the pastor's stepchildren and his own sons united beneath his roof.

Clark and Bob, briefly warned of their father's intention, refused for a few days to believe that such a thing could happen. They preserved for their own mother an affection that had so strengthened and developed that a usurpation of the position that had been hers in their father's household seemed not only a sacrilege but an iniquity of which even to think upon was treason. They

were present at their father's marriage but immediately upon the conclusion of the ceremony they disappeared, nor did they return to their home until John Ingersoll himself, frenziedly searching, discovered them wandering by the river, silent and disconsolate, at some distance from the town. He forebore to scold them and only demanded of them, with something like pleading in his voice, that they receive their stepmother's caresses with courtesy and their half brothers and sisters with a certain friendliness.

In the parlour they stood like little boys of rock while the woman, with an affection not insincere, kissed them and prophesied in a large and generous fashion that soon they would be good, even dear, friends and that now they had a whole batch of merry little playmates. Observing their cold and tearless misery, the good woman nevertheless set no store by it. Like Sarah, who in Belleville had had her methods of softening displeasure in children, she placed her trust in a skill at baking which had no equals in Ashtabula. For her cakes were of the very first order in cakes.

So the frigid manner of her stepsons disturbed her not a whit, though her own brood, well trained and studiously rehearsed, received, when, like so many baby quail, they ran forward to greet the sons of their new father, but short and bitter shrift of it and so dispersed and fled back to their mother in puzzled dismay.

Mrs. Ingersoll was to find that she had ill-judged her stepsons. The months went by and Bob and Clark preserved before her most important pastries an attitude of deprecation that seemed almost one of distrust. They

ate and slept and went to school, cared for the garden, and did a whole multitude of chores, sprung, since the arrival of their stepmother, dismally into existence, silently and with a hard composure alien to her experience of children. Occasionally their father beat them for activities carried on between themselves in the disused tannery beyond the river, the ignition of firecrackers imprisoned beneath tin cans or, more strictly forbidden, leapfrog in the sawdust ring of the little circus that progressed yearly throughout the state, for such conduct in their stepmother's opinion suited ill the sons of the Presbyterian pastor of Ashtabula. But, most rigidly, they kept to themselves, and the other children of the house, admiring and fain of their companionship, saw them only from afar off and that seldom.

Their father, perceiving in their characters qualities which frequently astonished him, had long before relinquished a hope, slender at best, that his sons would see eye to eye with him touching his marriage. It was proving, even to himself, something of a disappointment, and he had other reasons for depression. His sermons against slavery were again arousing an opposition that would, he knew too well, finally cause him to move on to yet another congregation. To this he was thoroughly used, but that his wife should take it upon herself to advise him to temper his words, to pay a grimy tribute to Belial for the sake of a little silver and a comfortable habitation, had filled him with a great anger. He had spoken to her, he feared, a little harshly, and the need to do so had saddened him. His Mary, he reflected, would have cut off her right hand rather than suggest compromise with villains and a villainous institution. A man nearing fifty, his mind dwelt



much on his first and best-beloved wife, the woman of his youth and promise, of his happiest years. And yet the widow, good soul, did her best, a worldly best though that might be, to care for him. And she had worries. Her children . . . . Unconsciously, in thinking of them, a certain distaste fled across his mind. At such times he checked his ponderings lest Jehovah, considering him from the Ohio skies, be seriously displeased.



## CHAPTER VI

THE day of John Ingersoll's expected resignation from the pastorate in Ashtabula came and went, and a few hours after it had taken effect, his wife was busy at packing and dismantling the house and directing, with a voice grown unhappily querulous, her children at a multitude of little tasks. Bob and Clark ran errands, the former lingering sombrely in the shop of Mr. Robertson while that bereaved citizen spoke briefly of the future that he foresaw for him if he should continue honestly at his books, sacred and profane, and abjure the society of all those who were not inclined toward God. Mr. Robertson had in mind a certain hardy fellow who kept a livery stable in the neighbourhood and whose narratives of divers Indian wars were, in Bob's experience, unparalleled for colour and a certain richness of language. This man, by his own accounts a very Hector for prowess, had, it was averred, been scalped at Tippecanoe, but had none the less risen from what might well have been his final resting place to save General Harrison from a flung tomahawk and, all hairless as he was, to slay none other than Tecumseh himself when that ill-starred chieftain ventured to come to grips with him. To Bob he was a hero of dimensions, but to Mr. Robertson, who deprecated his arsenal of oaths, he was a liar of parts best made use of in the pillory. He hoped, he said, that in North Madison, whither John Ingersoll had been called to fill the pulpit of the First Con-

gregational Church, there would be no veterans of Tippecanoe supplied alike with mendacity, profanity, and bad whisky. Bob courteously shared this hope and bade him farewell, returning home, his pockets filled with nuts and raisins, which he shared with Clark.

Before clambering among his half brothers and sisters into the Cleveland coach, he paid a last visit to the Ashtabula General Livery Stables. The slayer of Tecumseh, moved by this testimony of friendship, breathed stertorously upon his departure and with alarming sincerity called his attention to one important aspect of life. "Son," he conjured hoarsely, "your dad says I'm a-goin' to hell when I die, sure as hell. And, son, maybe I am, but before I die I'm a-goin' to have a good time doin' nobody no harm just the same as I'm a-doin' now. I ain't never heard tell of anyone who's been to hell and who kin tell what it's like, only your dad, and his information is second-hand like, but I've seen a regiment of folks who get in such a takin' bein' scared of hell right here in Ohio that they might as well be a-settin' there now, fur all the fun they get. God Almighty 'n' your dad are pals like, and your dad knows Him a heap better nor I do, but, all the same, I don't reckon He's so cussed mean an' all to sinners as your dad lets on. You go on and have a good time, son, and if you don't do nobody no harm, like as not you won't fry none when you cash in."

Bob hearkened to these periods with attention, and as their delivery had somewhat wearied his friend, he waited while this latter drank half a pint of Kentucky whisky.

"Good-bye, son, and look a-here! Here's a good-luck nut. It's a walnut, see, with little hinges so it opens, and

there's a little log cabin in one half with a pane of glass to hold it in, and Tippecanoe, me old commander, in the other, carved so lifelike an' all, you'd look for the old man for to beller when you opened it. Good-bye, son, an' don't you take too much stock in all this here hell fire."

Bob thanked him warmly and went away. He turned once to wave and caught the gleam of the sunlight on glass as his friend lifted his right arm. The veteran, deeply moved, was finishing the whisky.

The journey to North Madison was uncomfortable but uneventful and when reached the little town gave no great promise of being in any way different from Ashtabula. The pastor and his family, a large one now, were installed in an undistinguished house that compared unfavourably with the parsonage of their previous habitation, a fact which Mrs. Ingersoll did not fail to note and somewhat sullenly remark upon. The good woman was finding life increasingly difficult, what with her husband's yearly salary of two hundred dollars seldom being remitted to him on time and the constant worry that his spoken principles might eventually deprive him of it altogether. And, always, the distressing knowledge that it was useless to invest with a satisfactory atmosphere of permanence any home that they might make lest they be forced to abandon it and travel on once more. In Ashtabula, and amid surroundings familiar to her, the rigorous tenor of her days had affected her but slightly, but in North Madison, with no neighbourly women to fill her kitchen with a kindly commiseration for the difficulties of housewifery on a large scale, she yielded to depression and occasional peevishness. It was not, she told herself, that

she did not love her husband, but because she seemed, after almost a year of marriage, to know him no better than she had in the days when she had played the cosy and comfortable hostess to him on the afternoons of his parish calls. John Ingersoll had proved the one exception to her rule that it is by their stomachs that men are governed and that the wives who conciliate that portion of the anatomies of their husbands may never fear for their dominion. Upon this theory she had built her life, and until her second marriage it had proved brilliantly successful. Her cookery had insured her authority in her home, but John Ingersoll, alas for its witchery, dined habitually with more frugality than Franciscans upon fast days. A friend, close contemporary, and colleague of the Reverend Sylvester Graham, he followed consistently and strictly that vegetarian divine in his choice of diet and would eat no bread save Graham bread and meats of no variety whatever.

Such conduct at table had, in the days of their first intimacy, shocked his wife dreadfully, but she had pinned her faith on her pots and pans and trusted with a valiant confidence to the seductive quality of their contents. It had failed and, for a time, it was as though the very ground beneath her feet had crumbled like pie crust unskillfully achieved, and the sky had curdled like milk beyond its time. Vainly she wrought her crisp and toothsome masterpieces to watch with eyes grown wild and haggard her husband's complete obliviousness of their perfection, the while, barbarically, he cut and munched his prescribed loaf and ate his vegetables. Yet he seemed to thrive. His wife, with a pathetic hope, waited vainly

for the affronted digestion to revolt, but lo! he arose from his repasts strengthened and refreshed, leaving upon the table, cold and growing tasteless, dishes before which the President himself might well have found his appetite awakening.

As time passed, Mrs. Ingersoll, like one bereaved, came to mope a little at her stove, and she lost heart in her handiwork. Like an author robbed of inspiration, she descended to mere pot-boiling. But only the children noticed it, and her husband's digestion remained as diligently unpampered and withal rugged as before.

In North Madison he passed his fifty-first year, yet his congregation believed him, in spite of his splendid silver mane, a man still in his early forties, such was the vigour and living strength of that notable delivery and thunderous voice. His great physical strength seemed rather crescent than on the wane, and those of his flock so hardened in sin that their spirits might not yield to his spiritual minsterings yielded him at least a most absolute lip service for his stature and massive breadth. Indeed, a certain group of impious young men had undertaken to speak to him respectfully but at great length of the skill and muscular prowess of a local wrestler, a blacksmith who weighed two hundred and twenty-five pounds and whose grip was so formidable that he had upon occasion mounted horses and caused them to collapse simply by the constricting pressure of his legs about their ribs. John Ingersoll, a mild reminiscent light in his fine eyes, had observed that he, too, long, long ago, had been something of a wrestler, but he was an old man now, else he might essay a fall with this rural colossus. He had



left the young men, their hats in their hands, pondering all upon the same idea, hopeful yet fearful.

Only a day or two had passed when the pastor, upon his dignified way to a meeting of the elders of his church, encountered standing expectantly in his road the largest individual that he had yet encountered in Ohio. He topped the pastor by more than an inch, and his great sloping shoulders held between them a chest like a cask and hairy as a bear's. There was an anthropoidal menace in his pose, his long arms hanging loose, the palms of his preposterous hands outward, that arrested John Ingersoll's attention, especially since he seemed wonderfully slow about stepping aside to allow the pastor to pass on. In his small eyes, hard as pale pebbles, there was a look half angry and half mocking, and a spadelike beard that covered every inch of his face save only those eyes, a negligible forehead, and a copper nose, seemed to bristle with an almost audible truculence. John Ingersoll, since he sensed something importunate in the fellow's manner, halted.

"Do you wish to speak with me, friend?"

A voice absurdly shrill that issued from the warlike beard startled him extremely.

"Say, Parson, I've heard tell that ye been talkin' how ye kin lay me on me butt end, and I'm peaceable, see, but no parson kin put me on me butt end nor no other son of a Yankee mare ever foaled."

John Ingersoll stood frankly astounded.

"Never, to my knowledge, have I ever made such a heathenish boast to any man or woman alive, and more than that, I have never before set eyes upon you."



"Yes, ye have, too, and no gutted son of a——" A shadow fell upon the pastor's brow.

"My man, I advise you to moderate your language and that speedily, or you will very shortly find yourself locked up——"

A ridiculous squeak of laughter checked him.

"Who's a-goin' to? I'm a-goin' to lay you on your butt end, Parson, so grab your pants."

A rage of such a violence as he had not, God be thanked, known since the days of his sinful youth, shook John Ingersoll as a high wind might shake the ancient solidity of a great tree. He stepped back, removed his high hat, and placed it carefully upon his books of devotion. He took off and folded his coat, tentatively moved his liberated shoulders, and suddenly reached forward and gently slapped the bristling chops of his aggressor. With an extraordinary celerity he then seized with his right hand the other's left wrist and with his left hand closed upon his opponent's left elbow, swung with such titanic effort that he seemed, to the company of hidden onlookers behind windows and hedges that faced the street, to face back upon the way he had but lately come. The local champion, astonished for one fatal instant by the experienced deftness of this incredible parson, suddenly and dreadfully left the ground, in a short arc passed over John Ingersoll's bent and straining back, and fell with a dull impact on the small of his own in the dust. The pastor, when he looked again, was picking up his books, his hat and coat on and his linen arranged. John Ingersoll had heard a sharp crack as the fallen man had flown over him. He suspected that there would be no more

hostilities that day. He was right. Delaying a minute longer he scrutinized the late champion with care.

"Are you hurt, friend?"

"Me elbow."

"Ah, I was afraid of that. That's the worst of the Flying Mare. Let me help you."

"No, sir, Parson." He got somewhat lurchingly to his feet. "Parson, you're the boss. I ain't saying but what I warn't took by surprise, like, but you've got a grip on to you as good as me own. Shake!" He rolled away, nursing his left arm, the beard visible in still bristling fringes upon either side of his great head, the back of which seemed to express intentions to attend shortly to the promoters of the recent conflict. John Ingersoll, smothering a moment of unworthy pride, took up his way again. He found the elders awaiting him sombrely and filled each of them apparently with humours far from pleasing. Upon his appearance they said all together:

"Now, this is too bad, Doctor!"

"Scandalous, Doctor, scandalous."

"A street brawl, no less."

"A minister of the gospel rolling in the dust with a roustabout."

"A local bully!"

Two at least, though they uttered sounds, could not be understood at all, such was the anguished vehemence of their emotions. Their pastor surveyed them with bland surprise.

"Why, what a to-do is here. I was set upon in the street by a very big man anxious to do me physical injury, haled on, I greatly fear, by meddlers and mis-

chievous persons. I defended myself, and I did not, mark me, at any time roll or in anyway touch the dust save with my boot soles. If it seems proper and necessary so to do, I shall publicly apologize upon the Sabbath and explain the matter. Now, if you please, let me hear no more of it. To business, friends, to business."

The Sabbath found his church packed even more than was usual, for the story was abroad in the countryside that Doctor Ingersoll of the First Congregational Church, if a David for principle, was a very Goliath for strength. Before his sermon, he looked benignantly down upon the upturned faces of the congregation and cleared his throat.

"Dear friends, I was tempted, as you know, to wrestle with this man, which was not becoming in a minister; but I threw him in less than a minute."

Of the incident there was no further discussion, but of it a result, more or less direct, was the conversion to the church of almost a score of men, hard, strapping fellows all, who regularly attended service and who followed the pastor upon his travels afield like the bravi of a cinquecento gallant, save that their service was gratuitous and quite unobserved by the object of their muscular solicitude.

Bob and Clark felt at this time a great and grateful renewal of admiration and affection for their father. They had, since his marriage, been somewhat estranged from him, leading at ten and twelve years of age, respectively, lives the happiness and amusement of which were derived almost entirely from their habitual companionship. They had privately entertained a certain admiration for the wrestling blacksmith since they had

seen him bend without noticeable effort a horseshoe out of its proper shape into an uncurved tongue of iron, and the fact that their own father had mastered this furry titan reawakened an ancient and fiery admiration that previously had somewhat fallen upon the wane. Unbearable as they might consider his precepts, and they had, touching these, already reached a point where the paternal Jehovah found their developing minds completely skeptical, nevertheless, the rigid excellence of their father's character impressed and filled them with respect. They were finding, as they grew older, the atmosphere of their home more and more intolerable, and the Sabbath in North Madison in particular seemed to afflict them more than had those of Belleville or even Ashtabula. Weekdays, as they had aged, had discovered to them a freedom that they had not known or appreciated as younger children, and the oppression of the Sabbath-day routine seemed therefore the more bitter. This sabbatical blight began to fall upon the household at sundown on Saturday, and thereafter, until the same time upon the following day, it lay heavy and tyrannous not only upon the spirit but upon the body. In a prescient and notable maturity, Bob was wont in a famous lecture to describe it as though the memory of his boyhood Sundays yet lived and throbbed within him with all its sombre semitones preserved:

“In the olden times, they thought some days were too good for a child to enjoy himself. When I was a boy, Sunday was considered altogether too holy to be happy in. Sunday used to commence then when the sun went down

on Saturday night. We commenced at that time for the purpose of getting a good ready, and when the sun fell below the horizon on Saturday evening, there was a darkness fell upon the house ten thousand times deeper than that of night. Nobody said a pleasant word; nobody laughed; nobody smiled; the child that looked the sickest was regarded as the most pious. That night you could not even crack hickory nuts. If you were caught chewing gum, it was only another evidence of the total depravity of the human heart. It was an exceedingly solemn night. Dyspepsia was in the very air you breathed. Everybody looked sad and mournful.

“On Sunday morning the solemnity nad simply increased. Then we went to church. The minister was in a pulpit about twenty feet high, with a little sounding-board above him, and he commenced at ‘firstly’ and went on and on and on to about ‘twenty-thirdly.’ Then he made a few remarks by way of application; and then took a general view of the subject; and in about two hours reached the last chapter in Revelation.

“In those days, no matter how cold the weather was, there was no fire in the church. It was thought to be a kind of sin to be comfortable while you were thanking God. The first church that ever had a stove in it in New England divided on that account. So the first church in which they sang by note was torn in fragments.

“After the sermon we had an intermission. Then came the catechism with the chief end of man. We went through with that. We sat in a row with our feet coming to within about six inches of the floor. The minister asked us if we knew that we all deserved to go to hell, and



we all answered 'Yes.' Then we were asked if we would be willing to go to hell if it was God's will, and every little liar shouted 'Yes.' Then the same sermon was preached once more, commencing at the other end and going back. After that, we started for home, sad and solemn—overpowered with the wisdom displayed in the scheme of the atonement. When we got home, if we had been good boys, and the weather was warm, sometimes they would take us out to the graveyard to cheer us up a little. It did cheer me. When I looked at the sunken tombs and the leaning stones, and read the half-effaced inscriptions through the moss of silence and forgetfulness, it was a great comfort. The reflection came to my mind that the observance of the Sabbath could not last always. Sometimes they would sing that beautiful hymn in which occurs these cheerful lines:

“Where congregations ne'er break up,  
And Sabbaths never end.”

“These lines, I think, prejudiced me a little against even heaven. Then we had good books that we read on Sundays by way of keeping us happy and contented. I used to read Jenkyn's *Upon the Atonement*. I have often thought that an atonement would have to be exceedingly broad in its provisions to cover the case of a man who would write a book like that for a boy.

“But at last the Sunday wore away, and the moment the sun went down we were free. Between three and four o'clock we would go out to see how the sun was coming on. Sometimes it seemed to me that it was stopping for pure



meanness. But finally it went down. It had to. And when the last rim of light sank below the horizon, off would go our caps, and we would give three cheers for liberty once more."

A man, he lent to the narration of such reminiscences a levity that he was far from feeling. He spoke of his childhood ever with the shadow of a smile lest the drab misery of his recollections beget in his mind an egomania for their recounting, offensive to the public that he addressed. To his friends and to his family, Bob in later years scarce mentioned, at all the stern period of his minority. Though such a flight into the past as this was punctuated by laughter from the audience, these too laughed not whole-heartedly, for of them the greater part remembered too well a similar terrible dominion of a religion turned bitter as gall by superstition and an ignorance most human but utterly abysmal.

Of such were the Sabbaths in North Madison.

Bob and Clark were coming to look upon their father as two men sheathed somehow within the same body. Appreciating his absolute integrity and admirable courage, and a certain shining splendour of demeanour, they nevertheless deplored with a precocious comprehension the precepts by which this was darkened, and which were, they were convinced though they knew not why, false and outrageously unjust.

It seemed to them, as yet somewhat obscurely, that John Ingersoll was devoting his life to the salvation and dissemination of a gospel impossibly twisted and maleficent.

He was sacrificing himself for a cause inevitably to be, in time, rejected.

There lived in their minds the profane thought that the man who could throw over his shoulders as he would a child the strongest man in southern Ohio was wasting his talents and his opportunities in telling people things which they were far happier knowing nothing about. Not one man or woman, and certainly no children, in his congregation really enjoyed being warned of that certain destination toward which all were proceeding and where for an eternity all would remain in unspeakable torment for transgressions arbitrarily and unreasonably determined. Behind the expressions of sanctimonious gratification that descended like vizors upon the faces of his hearers when the pastor preached, Bob and Clark perceived with an uncanny acuteness a terror stark and horrid, a torture that seared once every week, leaving in credulous consciousnesses scars that ceased not to give pain from Monday to Saturday.

The congregation, or at least the godly ones of the congregation, believed that the more pain endured upon the earth, the greater the reward in heaven. Therefore, many of them would stir neither hand nor foot to save children from diphtheria or typhus, wives from the puerperal fever, or husbands from a multitude of besetting afflictions.

For here were opportunities to increase celestial bank accounts. Misery here, happiness there.

The Ingersoll boys, with a skepticism growing daily more hardy, wondered. . . .

## CHAPTER VII

IN GREENVILLE, Bond County, Ill., the name of Owen Lovejoy the Abolitionist was in the year 1851 a byword for courage and mistaken policies stubbornly pursued. Pastor of the Congregational Church of Princeton in Bureau County, he girded ceaselessly at slavery, and though to do so insured political ostracism and the enmity of Senator Stephen A. Douglas, his congregations never dwindled or deserted him. The inhabitants of Greenville, remembering the brutal slaughter of his brother, Elijah Lovejoy, at the hands of ruffians opposed to the destruction of slavery, waited sadly for the news of Owen's lynching, congratulating themselves meanwhile that no similarly minded divine invested their church with troublous doctrines of revolt. Some of them doubtless believed that the qualities of intrepidity and physical bravery necessary to do so were lacking in most ministers as they were in their new Congregational pastor, the Reverend John Ingersoll, a gentleman but lately arrived in Greenville with his family, and whose first sermon had not yet been preached. They were speedily undeceived. Joining forces with Lovejoy, John Ingersoll fell with a renewed zest upon the ancient foe. Indeed, Democrats as far away as Chicago heard with frowns of Greenville's defection, but Abraham Lincoln in Sangamon County, a jackleg lawyer considered by his opponents at last well beaten out of politics, heard the

news with a large satisfaction. Things were looking up. A few weeks after the new pastor's declaration of principle, his eighteen-year-old son Bob arrived to join him, and it was evident to the family with which the Ingersolls boarded that, though the boy seemed not wholly one with his father's religious beliefs, he was entirely in accord with his political ones. The state's tutelary deity, Senator Douglas, received at their hands a continual and irreverent chastisement, though the son was soon to become more of a Democrat than a Republican.

Bob had, during the preceding seven years, developed from a sturdy little boy of eleven, accustomed to the bitter routine of a household that even in North Madison, Ohio, passed for an exceeding godly one, into a stolidly built youth who promised to rival his tall father as a muscular and steel-thewed Christian. While persons disposed to converse at length with him found him wonderfully well grounded in all the standard theological works of the day, they also were some of them edified and some of them a little shocked to find him familiar with, and able to quote, not only Burns and the profane works of Shakespeare, but also Byron and other questionable poets of his ilk.

Though in Greenville he attended the academy conducted by Mr. Socrates Smith in the basement of Mr. Ingersoll's church, he so far outclassed his fellow students in the matter of learning and all scholarly attainment that he was able to spend most of his time flicking, with an astonishing accuracy, numberless paper wads at his labouring contemporaries who, at the hour of compt, hearkened in pained amazement to the masterly quality of his recitations. And like the jackleg lawyer in Sangamon

County, he was a raconteur who moved constantly attended by an audience that detonated periodically in howls as the climax of one anecdote marked the commencement of another. Mr. Socrates Smith, the preceptor, viewed his star pupil with some embarrassment, for, on more than one occasion, he, too, had exploded in most unmagisterial laughter at some question propounded with an artistic simplicity by the respectfully solemn scholar.

The boy was, in the opinion of the inhabitants of Greenville, a card.

He was, they said, a smart boy who would be a credit to the town providing that he didn't get all mixed up with Abolition and similar naughty follies.

And at this Bob would cock his handsome head and smile meditatively at the piled architectonics of the great white clouds as they sailed above the prairies toward the West.

He had had since leaving North Madison an interesting if difficult period of mental growth and experience. Little by little, he had emerged from the chrysalis of credulity and faith within which, even as a small boy, he had struggled. With Clark, he had in his early teens definitely rejected the Jehovah of his father and all His works. Outwardly, the two had continued to conform to the laws laid down by John Ingersoll for the observance of the Sabbath and a multitude of other days in the year set aside for devotions more than usually sombre, but they had done so merely to avoid a family schism and the agony of mind that a neglect to do so would have inflicted upon their parent. Actually, both were confirmed and genuine agnostics, and in whatever township in Illinois they had found themselves after leaving Ohio in 1844,



they had, rejecting Jenkyn and Baxter and their gloomy brethren, sought to enliven their lives with authors owning obviously no allegiance to the suzerainty of Jehovah.

Bob had been the first to stumble upon the path that led to deliverance from the family library. Going one day to the cobbler that his handiwork might reinforce a pair of shoes much worn and broken, he observed that the old man, a Glasgow Scot, was, upon his entrance, reading a leather-bound octavo and apparently much taken with its contents. Bob sat down and removed the shoes, and the Scot, taking them, had perforce relinquished his book to his customer and, in doing so, rent for the latter the clouds asunder in a whole new sky, a blazing and glorious expanse that swallowed in its radiance all memories of the black dragoons upon the paternal shelves.

Years later, Bob was wont to speak of the experience as a sort of emotional salvation, a release from an intolerable bondage, an intellectual redemption and a resurrection. He was, he would recall, "familiar with the writings of the devout and insincere, the pious and petrified, the pure and heartless. Here was a natural, honest man. I knew the works of those who regarded all nature as depraved, and who looked upon love as the legacy and perpetual witness of original sin. Here was a man who plucked joy from the mire, made goddesses of peasant girls, and enthroned the honest man. One whose sympathy, with loving arms, embraced all forms of suffering life, who hated slavery of every kind, who was as natural as heaven's blue, with humour kindly as an autumn day, with wit as sharp as Ithuriel's spear, and scorn that blasted like the simoon's breath. A man who loved this world,



this life, the things of every day, and placed above all else the thrilling ecstasies of human love." This man was Burns.

The ancient Scot hammered upon the battered shoes, and Bob wallowed in ecstasy. The footgear mended, he gave up the shabby volume with misgivings as one who, with his hands firmly twisted in a rope ladder the top of which is firmly fixed in Paradise, is forced once again to relax his grip upon it and drop again to earth. He asked the cobbler where such a book might be secured. He inquired tentatively as to what the price might be of such a trove. He stood now upon one foot and now upon the other and, somewhat to the Glaswegian's irritation, breathed heavily upon the back of his aged neck in an attempt to read further concerning a love like a red, red rose. He returned home like one enchanted and, without difficulty luring Clark from the kindling pile, discovered to him this thing of wonder that had befallen him. A week later, aided by a joint hoard of small savings and an obliging acquaintance in Chicago, the brothers possessed a reprinted copy of the Kilmarnock edition and were as boys delivered from a realm of darkness to one of light. They came habitually to speak in numbers delightfully roughened by that magic dialect, and they could on the instant quote the inspired ploughman at any stanza and at any line.

The dark influence of Jehovah in their lives began to dwindle perceptibly.

Following this period, Bob had absorbed Byron and Tennyson, but he retained Burns as his chief method of egress from moods of extreme depression induced by his

father's insistence upon his participation in protracted communions with his god.

Then came the greatest revelation of all.

The supreme emancipation.

He discovered Shakespeare.

His own description of the most blessed experience of his youth he was wont to give in later years with feeling as vibrant in his magnificent voice as though the miracle had come to him but yesterday:

"One night I stopped at a little hotel in Illinois, many years ago, when we were not quite civilized, when the footsteps of the red man were still in the prairies. While I was waiting for supper, an old man was reading from a book, and among others who were listening, was myself. I was filled with wonder. I had never heard anything like it. I was ashamed to ask him what he was reading; I supposed that an intelligent boy ought to know. So I waited, and when the little bell rang for supper I hung back and they went out. I picked up the book; it was Sam Johnson's edition of Shakespeare. The next day I bought a copy for four dollars. My God! more than the national debt. You talk about the present straits of the Treasury [1895]. For days, for nights, for months, for years, I read those books, two volumes, and I commenced with the introduction. I haven't read that introduction for nearly fifty years, certainly forty-five, but I remember it still. Other writers are like a garden diligently planted and watered, but Shakespeare is a forest where the oaks and elms toss their branches to the storm, where the pine towers, where the vine bursts into blossom at its foot. That book opened to me a new world, another nature.

While Burns was the valley, here was a range of mountains with thousands of such valleys; while Burns was as sweet a star as ever rose into the horizon, here was a heaven filled with constellations. That book has been a source of perpetual joy to me from that day to this; and whenever I read Shakespeare—if it ever happens that I fail to find some new beauty, some new presentation of some wonderful truth, or another word that bursts into blossom, I shall make up my mind that my mental faculties are failing, that it is not the fault of the book.”

Bob's knowledge of the plays contained in his two precious volumes became as thorough and as ready in its application as was that which he possessed of Burns. Against the latter, Jehovah had made a losing but a stubborn fight, but with the arrival of Shakespeare the war was over. Against the two of them the creed of gloom and the dominion of misery might not prevail. When Bob reached Greenville his father had come sadly to the conclusion that the brand, determined not to be snatched away into safety, must submit to the burning, and he could not but admit that never had he seen brand so satisfied with its destiny and so logical an advocate of the flames. Between father and son the subject of the son's dissension and heresy was rarely discussed. John Ingersoll had remarked in his boy those characteristics so vigorously present in himself, a rigid adherence to principles believed in and an intellectual honesty that utterly forbade their betrayal.

While the pastor laid on for human freedom as against human bondage in the land and Owen Lovejoy thundered his coöperation in Bureau County, sublimely ignoring

the hairy men who spat tobacco juice about his feet as he walked the streets of Princeton and muttered brutal descriptions of how his brother Elijah had died, Bob sat in the one classroom of Mr. Socrates Smith's basement academy and alternated with his exemplary recitations and his marksmanship with paper wads the casual composition of verse.

His productions somewhat recalled the lyric fervour of his beloved Burns though, as was natural, their flowers lacked something of that texture and rugged simplicity so notable in the Scot's. In a copy of the *Greenville Journal*, published sometime in June, 1852, appeared lines on "The Wavy West," unobtrusively signed with the initials "R. G. I." and dated "Greenville, April 15." There were twelve stanzas, all of admirable scansion and of a content, if mellifluous, certainly lyrical. The poem, in part, ran thus and brought to the attention of the townsfolk yet another facet of their young friend's ability:

"Thou glorious world of bloom,  
Where bending flowers gently blow  
And o'er thy breast their leaflets throw  
In beauty's soft perfume;

"Where dark-haired Indian girls,  
Reclining on thy dewy breast,  
In morning dew and sunlight dressed,  
Adorned with dewy pearls,

"First felt the tender flame,  
Saw lover's lips in rapture move  
And felt the trembling beat of love  
Thrill wildly o'er their frame."

Mr. Socrates Smith was for a time somewhat distressed by the adjectival repetition of the word "dewy," used, as he pointed out, with the noun form, three times in one stanza, and the fact that these charming females seemed to possess between them but one frame. It seemed to Mr. Smith that this might lead not only to the formation of false conclusions about the West, a large part of which he understood to be exceedingly dry, but to misunderstandings touching its inhabitants; but on the grounds of poetic license his criticisms, small and hesitant ones at worst, were withdrawn. He found it even harder than before, after Bob's appearance in the public press, to preserve toward his pupil an attitude consonant with his pedagogic position, and late in 1852 he one day earnestly desired John Ingersoll to remove his son from the academy on the grounds that the boy was as well able to dispense learning as he was himself. Why not, he suggested, find in the vicinity a small school that Bob himself could teach?

A month later, through the kind offices of Mr. McBane of Metropolis in the County of Massac, Bob's school was found, a tiny log cottage where the children of the Massac farmers congregated every morning at nine to find their master there before them, a fire built in the stove and the floor swept in preparation for the day. The curriculum of the Metropolis school proved during Bob's administration an extraordinarily comprehensive one, seasoned with applications and illustrations that held the pupils spellbound with joy. Their Mr. Ingersoll made the rules of reading, writing, and arithmetic not only easy of comprehension but actually interesting, and it was with



genuine alarm that they learnt one day that, owing to a bad year and consequent misfortunes with stock and crops, their parents could no longer pay the small sum necessary for their tuition. A deputation of gloomy fathers waited upon Bob at his desk in the schoolhouse to apprise him of this fact, and having done so, shuffled their feet and gazed forlornly at the hats turning ceaselessly in their red and corded hands.

Bob pondered, chewing reflectively upon the frayed end of the official ruler. Finally he picked up his pen and dipped it in the inkstand. "Bring the bills with you?" Each parent dug dismally into his butternut-juice-stained jeans and produced his crumpled testimonial of service rendered and received. They were placed in a little pile before the schoolmaster, who began suddenly to read swiftly through them, scribbling upon each one and blotting the ink carefully after the final flourish. Finally, he leaned back in his chair and designated the bills with a generous wave. "There you are, gentlemen, and be good enough to see that your children get off to school promptly this month."

The farmers of Massac County, picking up their unpaid bills, found them receipted in full, and after a few hoarse words of thanks, took their ways home. A man who was not only smart but open-handed was in their opinion destined to succeed in life. As for the children, their relief was so great that it impressed even Bob, and he began to believe that perhaps he was making education too easy for them. He consequently filled the air with an unusual discipline, but the reform lasted one day only. Recalling with a sudden awful depression the manner of



his own early schooling, the closet and the candle and the miserable prescription of Baxter or Sibbe or Jenkyn, he recoiled from inflicting upon these rapturous children a system even remotely resembling it. And besides, his pupils esteemed writing, absorbed reading, and dealt faithfully with arithmetic. So the Metropolis Academy prospered until Jehovah, almost forgotten, entered once more into its teacher's ken.

## CHAPTER VIII

BOB was "boarding around." On excellent terms with the farmers of the district, parents for the most part of his pupils and beneficiaries of the episode of the receipted bills, he made free of a score of warm kitchens and slept beneath various roofs, invariably welcome and not a little courted. His life, while not merry, was yet not unpleasant, and his long, uninterrupted evenings were devoted to reading a stock of books carried with him or imported by devious routes from Chicago. For a time he had the countryside to himself in his capacity of a young man of learning, and his influence waxed not only in his diminutive schoolhouse but abroad among the voting citizens of Illinois. He was acquiring a reputation in the county. It was at this point in his magisterial career that Jehovah, as his friend the Indian fighter of Ashtabula was wont to express it, "bought into the game."

Suddenly, upon a fair morning in the early summer of 1853, he beheld upon the roads as he made his way to his academy a number of aliens, clad uniformly after a familiar fashion, and busily passing hither and thither between the farmhouses holding talk at intervals and patting the school-bound children upon the head. These individuals seemed all to have sprung suddenly into being during the night. Their appearance in such numbers was magical. Bob, halting near a group of them, grew sombre. The morning seemed to darken and grow a little

chilly. The atmosphere so vividly induced by that hymn descriptive of the Presbyterian paradise sung habitually in his father's church,

“Where congregations ne’er break up,  
And Sabbaths never end,”

beset him so heavily that the elasticity and vigour of his youth were for an instant blighted. Nevertheless, it was with accustomed courtesy that he wished one of the newcomers a good-morning and received in reply a greeting a trifle unctuous and a remark to the effect that the weather was fit and proper for a revival. Bob, his worst fears realized, assented and continued gloomily about his business. Hell fire and damnation, predestination and divine election, and redemption, were, he felt, already scorching the new grass and bending the spirits of the good folk whose children sat on the little benches before him.

He returned to his lodgings in the early afternoon to find a company of the revivalists perched like crows before the house. These were, he learnt, not Presbyterians but Baptists, and for a minute his spirits lightened. It was then to be a Baptist revival. The recollection that all the Baptists that he had ever known differed from Calvinist Presbyterians only in the matter of the complete affusion, smote him, however, again into dejection. Pensively, he lent an ear to the discussion afoot concerning the welfare of the crops and the pleasure of Jehovah, and marking the familiar intonations, grew more and more depressed. Old times, old times. He went to bed early, having eaten his dinner at the kitchen table, around which board a half dozen of the revivalists also had sat.

Two days passed dismally, and the revivalists revived with a will and at meat cast fruitlessly their nets toward Bob in attempts to draw the schoolmaster into debates. Bob remained courteous but perfectly silent. He ate and disappeared, nor did the Baptists perceive him at service, a fact that began to breed distrust of him in their minds. A mighty pert young man, but he needed his comeuppance. A day came when, with a whole company of clerics at supper, they all set about the silent boy with a continual and exceeding irksome clatter of questions that eventually drew his fire.

"What do you think of baptism, Mr. Ingersoll?"

"Yes, Mr. Ingersoll, give us your opinion about that."

The query went the round as Bob, folding his napkin, prepared to rise. He halted, seemed to meditate and perpend. He rolled a fine expressive eye about the table and tapped his teeth for a brief moment with a finger.

"Well, I'll tell you. With soap, baptism is a good thing."

Ill-advised, the host and hostess combined in a brief wild howl of laughter, but it died in unlovely strangulation. The silence that fell was like the sword of Damocles no longer suspended but heavy and terrible in descent. Smiling only faintly at one of his pupils, a child of the house open-mouthed by the door, Bob withdrew. He did not see his interlocutors again, at least not to speak to.

Next day he taught as usual, but as he made ready to leave the academy in the afternoon, he was waited upon by a company which he recognized as the school board. Horribly embarrassed, they looked at the region of his shirt front and presented him with a sealed message.

They coughed. One of them dropped his hat and, recovering it, rushed upon Bob and shook his hand and as swiftly found the open door and disappeared. His companions followed his example. Bob found himself alone, the packet in one hand, the other tingling. He opened the message and, as he read, found to his own astonishment that its contents did not find him unprepared. The Baptists merited some respect for the extreme celerity with which they had acted. Bob was dismissed from his position as in the opinion of the board his religious views were not those calculated to instil a proper mental viewpoint and attitude into his pupils. Further than this there was nothing, not even a tithe of the salary owed to him.

Bob paid that evening his lawing at the house where he had lodged, and lacking additional funds, set off on foot in the following dawn to rejoin his father, his sister Mary Jane, and Clark at Marion in Williamson County. He went lamented by all save the Baptists.

In Marion, after a not uninteresting journey, he found Clark filled with a great enthusiasm. Clark was studying law, and how better could Bob employ his enforced leisure than by joining him in this study to the end that both might simultaneously be admitted to the bar and set up in practice together? With Bob the suggestion found instant favour. The Honourable Willis Allen and his son William Joshua Allen were in Marion practising in partnership, and by studying with them Bob might soon acquire the necessary knowledge for the bar examination. Bob allowed no time to pass before apprenticing himself. He went to work forthwith, and the elder Allen, a lawyer

of experience and ability, found him a pupil with a mind not only receptive but astonishingly retentive. Mr. Allen, who was acquainted with the bar examinations in Illinois, did not believe that Bob would experience with them much real difficulty.

His conclusion was just. On December 20, 1854, Bob, in his pocket a certificate of his moral character, which would have confounded the Baptist brethren of the previous year's experience, and the facts instilled by the Allens all neatly marshalled in his mind, visited Mount Vernon in Jefferson County and presented himself to receive admission to the legal profession in his state. It was a pleasant day's work. Bob appeared at the courthouse and smoked cigars with the examining authorities until a half hour before noon, at which time it was suggested that the company, distributed upon the steps of the edifice, adjourn inside that a certain formality might invest the proceedings. The cigars were thrown away or carefully pinched out and filed in pockets for further use, and the examination was in progress. The certificate of moral character was read and subjected to a few cordial witticisms, it being the spoken opinion of the Court that the young fellow from Marion was a hell raiser from way back, at which everyone laughed genially and long. The Court then in a fashion exquisitely perfunctory asked a few questions which were flawlessly answered and following which the examining authorities adjudged the hour ripe for adjournment.

There being no dissenting voices, Bob without further ado was led to the Golden Eagle Free State Hotel and Gent's Saloon upon the corner opposite the courthouse,



and there informed that, before taking the oath of office as an attorney, liquid refreshment for the Court was in order, the applicant "settin' 'em up." Two hours later, the company reappeared in the street and, surrounded by a pervasive and triple-ringed vapour, disappeared once again into the examination room. The Court had indicated a preference for rye whisky, and Bob had by courtesy been constrained to drink at least one of every four rounds, thereby becoming invigorated while remaining quite sober, but his examiners were, as the bartender observed, "mighty gay." Bob emerged in a few minutes, a lawyer and a member of the bar, and betook himself homeward, having seen his legal acquaintances safely back to one that required no certificate of membership whatever. Mr. Allen, Senior, smiled when he found his pupil returned and successful, but he deprecated the conclusions that might be drawn from the experience. Illinois, he pointed out, was crawling with successful survivors of similar tests, but not so many of these earned good livings with their knowledge, however certified. The need to use one's brains came after admission, not so much before it, and the formality of the latter should not encourage overconfidence or an easy faith in success. Senator Douglas, not so much Abe Lincoln, because he hadn't done anything to speak of yet anyway, was an example of an able lawyer who had by hard work become one of the greatest men of the nation, though there were lawyers just as able who were nowhere because they had relapsed into comfortable inactivity after passing from the class of legal fledglings. Bob agreed. Hard work in his chosen profession could weld a lever capable in Illinois in the 'fifties

of nearly any achievement in public life. In the meanwhile, Clark, too, had secured his admission, after an identical species of accolade, and when in 1855 Bob suggested moving to Shawneetown in Gallatin County and practising together under the firm name of "E. G. and R. G. Ingersoll," he assented with enthusiasm.

In Marion, Bob had contributed to the household expenses of his father and sister by acting as deputy in the office of the clerk of the records in the circuit as well as the county court. Arrived in Shawneetown, he engaged himself in the Federal land office of which an old friend, Captain Cunningham, sometime resident of Marion, was register, but his previous experience impelled him in a little time to resign from this position and to accept that of deputy in the office of the clerk of the circuit and county courts of Gallatin. The work was familiar, and John E. Hall the clerk, a congenial and kindhearted man, though Bob remembered him as a bitter disputant when aroused, and a bad enemy. Mr. Hall was continually at odds with the Democratic organization, not only in Shawneetown, but in all southern Illinois, and his chief abomination was Colonel James G. Sloo, the local party leader. The Colonel and Mr. Hall were constantly upon the verge of shooting it out, and each walked warily lest the other be the first to pistol him.

On October 10, 1856, Bob, picking up the *Intelligencer*, a journal published in Marion, was interested to find that his superior's enemy had received at the hands of an unknown correspondent signing himself "Vindex" a public castigation very savagely executed indeed. Awaiting the arrival of Mr. Hall, he sat in his office with his feet





upon the windowsill and read it with rising excitement. Colonel Sloo in the opinion of "Vindex" was a notable blackguard, a rascal of parts, and a ruffian whose private life was such that any public influence that he might possess must thereby be rendered maleficent and corrupt. It was terrific what "Vindex" had to say, and when Mr. Hall entered, Bob discovered to him the fate that had befallen Colonel Sloo. Mr. Hall betrayed surprise, but it lacked something in sincerity. "He deserves it," he commented, and the subject was dropped, though in the town that evening it was rumoured that young Robert C. Sloo, but just back from West Point, was gunning for Vindex, whoever he might be. Mr. Hall remained unimpressed. "I reckon Vindex is about as handy with a derringer as any young blowhard Sloo could get," he remarked to Bob, but if he knew the identity behind that veritable *nom-de-guerre*, he failed to disclose it.

October in Shawneetown was that year filled with the trepidations and rumblings of political upheaval. The Anti-Nebraska men of Illinois had convened in Bloomington under the leadership of Trumbull and Lincoln, Owen Lovejoy, Oglesby, Palmer, and other Republicans of influence, and the lawyer of Sangamon County had stirred the convention even more than the great Abolitionist divine when at the conclusion of an historic speech he had turned toward the Southern Disunionists and declared, "We won't go out of the Union, and you sha'n't." Senator Douglas fought tirelessly to keep the state within the Democratic fold, but of this the straining wattles were giving way daily before the determined outrush of the disaffected members of that party.



In Shawneetown, Mr. Hall, the clerk of the circuit and county courts, was radiant, but Colonel Sloo preserved a sombre silence and the demeanour of a sheathed bowie knife. On November 11th, Bob, in the clerk's office, was receiving the dictation of his superior when he became aware that the door of the room had been opened and someone was standing in the doorway. Mr. Hall's back was to the door and as Bob lifted his head he, too, checked his words. Mr. Robert C. Sloo stood a pace within the room, his hat on his head and his hands hidden in the folds of his frock coat. Though it was not warm, there was sweat upon his face, and the fixity of his eyes suggested to both men that he was probably drunk. He opened his mouth and Bob saw the cords of his throat work for an instant in a vain attempt to speak. Mr. Hall started to rise. Possibly in the thirty seconds that followed both he and Bob realized that the autumnal afternoon had swiftly declined into a not mortal shadow, but Hall's realization was not long. At the clerk's rising Sloo, with an expression of agony, said, "Mr. Hall, a word with you, sir." His voice was creaking and on the instant he lifted his right arm.

Yet another thirty seconds, and Bob stood braced with Hall leaning against him, the breath that was in the man's lungs escaping in a series of little coughs. Supporting him, Bob realized that he had died instantly. With the splitting thunder of the shot, he had pitched gently into his deputy's arms, and before the acrid stench of the black powder had cleared from Bob's nostrils Hall was dead. Sloo had instantly turned upon his heel and disappeared.



The murderer made no attempt to escape and was jailed within the hour. A political assassination, or so rumour had it, the town was for the subsequent two months crowded with Democrats and Republicans from every county in Illinois. The trial lasted forty-two days, and the lawyers both for the prosecution and the defence numbered men whose names were as familiar to Bob as his own. Among them was John A. Logan, known impartially as "Black Jack" or "Dirty Work" Logan because of a reputation for endless daredeviltries and his assent to any work that Senator Douglas might recommend to his attention. Logan had been in a minor degree a distinguished soldier in the Mexican War, was a former member of the state Legislature, and the leader of supposedly all the wild young blades in Illinois professing Douglas for their leader, but Black Jack was far more than the roistering mercenary that some Republicans fondly supposed him. A formidable-looking young man with extraordinary black eyes and the lank black hair of a reputed Indian forbear, he showed an ability touching what was finally to be the disposition of young Mr. Sloo that undeceived many political opponents who had underrated him. Mr. Logan as prosecuting attorney for the state gave promise of what he was afterward to become, but, nevertheless, Sloo was acquitted on the grounds of emotional insanity, a verdict agreeable to the future commander-in-chief of the Grand Army of the Republic in that the prisoner of the Court was a Douglas Democrat but acutely displeasing to him otherwise. As for Bob, he was outraged and in some measure his party began to

seem to him repugnant and unworthy of devotion. The firm of E. C. and R. G. Ingersoll began to waver from their allegiance to the Little Giant.

Touching the welfare of the two members of this firm, Judge William G. Bowman of Shawneetown took great interest in furthering its development and his own office, a treasure room of literature not only legal, he placed at the disposal of both young men. There, every evening, Bob read until past midnight, passing from law to theology, from theology to philosophy, and thence by easy and meditative stages to poetry. He became a profound student, not only of comparative religion, but of Spencer, Tyndall, and Darwin, and the agnosticism nascent in his boyhood had at twenty-three attained a young and lusty maturity that clamoured for expression. His views were well known among his friends, but not since his remark provoked by the Baptist brethren had he given them a wider currency. It happened, however, that immediately after a dozen nights spent in a careful examination of the works of Tom Paine, Bob attended a picnic held on the outskirts of the town, at which was to speak a local divine of some note. Bob spent a hilarious forenoon surrounded by his accustomed body of auditors, and after the barbecue lit a cigar and bent his steps toward the stump from which the orator was to address the entire farming gentry of Gallatin County. The hour appointed came and went and still the minister tarried. Sundry individuals wearing rosettes gathered in groups and pondered aloud, and children, stilled against the commencement of the oration, broke again into soprano cryings and halloings. Finally, there came one in great haste from the town with the

news that the speaker of the day had been taken ill and begged to be excused. The rosetted individuals were greatly put about. They argued and pondered further, then suddenly bore down all at once upon Bob. Would he, they asked, as a young man of intellect well known for his abilities, address a few words of devotional import to the ladies and gentlemen there assembled? If he refused, all these would return disappointed, their picnic spoilt.

Bob, checking an impulse to laugh at the irony of this request, courteously replied that he would with pleasure address the ladies and gentlemen present, but that he could not answer for his theology. The rosetted ones, jubilant that the day was saved, led him to the stump and he was introduced. The children were again stilled, the men threw away their cigars, and the women, smoothing their hair and brushing remnants of the barbecue from their aprons, lent attentive ears.

Bob, commencing with a somewhat florid gambit, felt, after the first few moments, his nervousness yield to an extraordinary satisfaction. Recapturing nouns and adjectives from an opening necessarily a little vague, he suddenly recalled that he had the night before sworn never to speak in public without mentioning the name of Tom Paine. The injustice done the author of *Common Sense* had filled him with a potent anger, and here to his hand was an opportunity to defend in some measure an outraged memory. A new light in his eyes and a greater confidence in his manner, he seized upon the task. He noted that, after some minutes had gone by, the rosettes had congregated all together again and that the counte-

nances above them were rigid and somewhat flushed, but he also observed that with his words the faces of his other hearers were vividly expressing those emotions that now consciously he strove to induce.

This discovery filled him with a sudden intoxication of power.

He rehabilitated Tom Paine in the estimate of southern Illinois until, concerning him, he had exhausted his entire stock of information and conclusions.

A large part of his audience were, after he had descended from his stump, undecided as to the subject of his discourse, but all had been several times upon the point of tears and of hilarious laughter. The consensus of opinion seemed to be that he had been preaching on St. Paul, but the rosetted men knew better. They were very angry but at the same time they could not but admit that Bob had saved the picnic. So they thanked him, and having drunk what remained of the beer, went home, but Bob, when he returned to Shawneetown, found the tidings of his heresy there before him. Judge Bowman, when he met him, shook with astonishing chuckles.

"A heretic at three-and-twenty. Oh my, oh my!"

## CHAPTER IX

SHAWNEETOWN in 1856 was the metropolis of southern Illinois, but its atmosphere was at noon no less somnolent than at midnight, and its activity at all times partook of a rhythm singularly spaced and retarded. Able lawyers and rising statesmen such as Bowman, who became afterward a member of the Constitutional Convention of Illinois, a state senator and surveyor general of Utah, had become as citizens used to its unhurried and sleepy progress, but Bob and Clark, both young and on the high road to a precocious success, complained that, even in the brightest sunlight, the town never ceased to snore gently and persistently. The judge, who perceived that Bob, already becoming a unit of influence in Democratic circles, was as promising timber for the Great Senator's uses as he had yet encountered, parried his young friend's thrusts with the remark that in the next election Bob would find action enough if he would only bide his time and study his law. He added that any mere boy who could argue so closely and convincingly on any subject from Tom Paine to the Kansas-Nebraska bill would be, before he knew it, standing in Douglas's shoes and leading the whole parade.

Judge Bowman would frequently, with a fine gesture, designate the Shawneetown courthouse and observe that yonder was the cradle of giants. One day in January, 1857, he terminated a lengthy conjuration with his ha-



bitual remark and was grieved to note a certain levity in Clark's countenance. Bob was scrutinizing the courthouse with a pensive expression, his cigar at a dejected angle. "Well," he murmured, "it looks to me like a square box with a horse hitched on each side and a pimple on top." He left the judge speechless with alarm at this irreverence and returned with his brother to the office of the firm. The prairie was level, unchanging white as far as their eyes could see, and the snow fell leisurely as though it, like the town, had all eternity in which to accomplish its purposes. Bob and Clark looked at each other. "Peoria?" "Peoria. Let's pull our freight."

The following month saw the firm established, despite the most fervent of Judge Bowman's prayers and warnings, in the most important railroad centre in the southern section of the state. Politicians and lawyers who had known them in Shawneetown gave them a loud welcome with rye whisky and rosy prophecies, and the office of E. C. and R. G. Ingersoll was at once piled high with briefs and legal business.

The Peoria bench and bar in these years numbered among its members at one time or another Abraham Lincoln of Sangamon County, Senator Douglas, and Judge Sabine D. Puterbaugh, author of *Common Law Pleading and Practice* and *Chancery Pleading and Practice*, besides such men eminent in the annals of the state as Davis, Pinckney, Purple, Breeze, Manning, Merriam, McCune, and O'Brien. Bob and Clark, as their practice grew, as grow it did in a sudden splendid rush, acquired as partners men older than themselves whose names had long been familiar to them and whose work formed an



integral part in the development of Illinois. Bob worked in partnership not only with his brother but at various times with McCune, George Puterbaugh, and Judge Sabine Puterbaugh, and found himself at twenty-seven in a position no less distinguished than that of his older friends and coöperators. He had acquired since leaving Shawneetown so enthusiastic a following among the Democrats and so wide a reputation as a speaker that, when in 1860 the tornado of that year's presidential election spun into being over the prairies of Illinois, he was nominated by his party for representative from the Fourth Congressional District of that state.

Illinois in 1860 was bedlam. The Republican National Convention held in Chicago nominated, after continued strife and a systematic pandemonium organized for Mr. Seward by Tammany Hall under the redoubtable leadership of Tom Hyer the Bowery heavyweight, not the New York Senator, but Lincoln "The Rail-splitter and Giant-killer." The Seward forces marshalled by Thurlow Weed died gamely and even at the finish remained hysterically incredulous. Tom Hyer, after knocking out two Democratic friends who attempted to sympathize with him, continued valiantly to direct the Tammany clique at the very moment when Mr. William M. Evarts, in a postlude filled with pathos, was shouting to the madmen howling at his feet, "The name of William Henry Seward will be remembered when Presidents are forgotten." Judge David Davis, Orville H. Browning, Leonard Swett, and Norman B. Judd had, as Hyer put it, "sure handled their man well." Judd, standing on a high chair, had nominated the man who habitually referred to himself

as a jackleg lawyer when the thunder of applause that had greeted Evarts's nomination of Seward was still hanging in deafening reverberations in the far corners of the hall. The roar that greeted Lincoln's name had communicated itself to the packed street outside and continued until the Tammany clique, gazing dolefully at their truculent leader, gave up the fight. Tom Hyer, known by virtue of a felonious pun as the embodiment of Seward's oft-discussed Higher-law, had remained himself nonplussed. The first vote cheered him, however, as Mr. Seward had received  $173\frac{1}{2}$  votes on the first ballot to Mr. Lincoln's 102 and Thurlow Weed, smiling broadly, was seen to be active in the ranks of the delegations from Pennsylvania and Indiana. The second ballot had disclosed  $184\frac{1}{2}$  for the great man from New York State and the astonishing amount of 181 for the rail-splitter of Sangamon. The cheering had died away as the third ballot was taken, but the steady roar in the street found a living echo in the chamber when Lincoln was found to have received  $231\frac{1}{2}$  votes, lacking but one and a half for the nomination. Weed and Evarts had made a last attempt to swing Pennsylvania and Indiana, but Simon Cameron and Caleb B. Smith, their men with stolid and frozen countenances behind them, stood firm for the Prairie against the Empire State. Save for Tom Hyer, there was no sound in the chamber when Mr. Carter of Ohio arose to change four votes of his delegation from Salmon P. Chase to Abraham Lincoln.

It was hours before the cheering died away and days before the stunned cohorts of Seward had ceased to repeat the worn and useless though quite obviously just remark

that, had the convention been held in any city but Chicago, the Senator would have been successful. The Bowery boxer, volcanic and luminous with Kentucky Bourbon, had been led sobbing away, and in Peoria, Bob Ingersoll, his eyes alight with premonitory flashings, awaited the opening of the campaign.

Senator Stephen A. Douglas, absolute leader of the Democratic party in the West and but for his determined and courageous stand in the United States Senate against forcing slavery upon the people of Kansas contrary to their will—a proceeding which earned him the sustained and bitter hatred of the South—the chief of the entire National Democratic organization, had been nominated at Baltimore after a bitter and barren fight at Charleston. In that city, the slave-owners had had their revenge, and though the Little Giant had achieved a majority, they had withdrawn from the convention, screaming, like so many naughty children, “Down with popular sovereignty!” and when, on June 18th, the disrupted party had again convened at Baltimore and Douglas had been nominated, they had once more seceded in a body, nominating John C. Breckinridge of Kentucky, with Joseph Lane of Oregon for Vice President.

The Democrats of Illinois considered with laughter the haling forth of the Kentuckian. Bob, who had looked askance at his chief’s proceedings touching the Kansas-Nebraska bill, had resumed with enthusiasm his allegiance upon Douglas’s successful fight against the introduction of slavery into Kansas. Though in substance believing with Lincoln that the institution as a whole was an abomination, he did not in 1860 consider that, as an issue,

its disposition should be allowed to jeopardize the Union. Nor did he believe that the dominion of the Republican party would, when in power, be sufficiently potent to prevent its further encroachment. Judge Kellogg, one of the foremost organizers of that party, composed as it was of original Abolitionists, old-line Whigs, Free-soil Democrats, and in general all those opposed to the further spread of slavery, proved, in the end, even less violent in his opposition to it than did his young opponent.

Upon the joining of the issues, Bob immediately challenged his somewhat formidable opponent to a series of public debates, a procedure borrowed from the two principles in the great race and one eminently fitted to bring before the citizens of Illinois a young man of purely local reputation. Judge Kellogg, with a kindly but noticeable patronage of manner, greeted Bob in the old Dunn's Hall in Galesburg, where was held the first of these contests, with a few words subtly calculated to bring home to him the courageous but fruitless fight that not only he but all Democrats were making against Lincoln and his ticket. Bob admitted to himself that Senator Lyman Trumbull, Richard Yates, Lovejoy, Browning, Richard J. Oglesby, John M. Palmer, and a dozen more, including young Joe Cannon, composed a formidable attack, but to the Judge's benignant hints that in this campaign David was bound to miss Goliath, he merely returned the observation that Black Jack Logan was making a thousand votes a day for Douglas. His opponent looked disagreeably impressed, and the two parted to prepare for battle. Judge Kellogg, like many another Lincoln man, was sick and tired of John A. Logan,

a bitter, snarling, abusive young man who spoke daily in evilly adjectival crescendos concerning nigger equality and black Republicanism.

Galesburg was packed for the occasion, and Bob found, to his intense gratification, that though the audience that occupied every foot of standing room in Dunn's Hall had heard the biggest guns of the campaign, Seward of New York, John P. Hale of New Hampshire, General James W. Nye, Doolittle of Wisconsin, Joshua R. Giddings the Ohio Abolitionist, Carl Schurz, and Douglas the greatest of them all, they welcomed the introduction of his name with a shout of genuine and sustained applause. Galesburg, in 1860, was proverbially an "Abolition hole" and the sworn foe of the Little Giant and all his works, so that in the thunder of this first ovation was contained the measure of the compliment paid to the young lawyer from Peoria. Judge Kellogg, as the colleague of Lincoln, received, as Bob had expected that he would, a prolonged demonstration that terminated in three cheers for Abe the Rail-splitter and Giant-killer and a few sporadic outbursts of desperate screaming for Douglas. These, however, died early, and the hall fell quiet as the Judge launched into his speech.

An old war horse who had already served two terms in Congress, William Kellogg, figuratively speaking, gathered his audience into the kitchen and invited them to sit easy and not listen too hard. He established, between himself and his hearers, an atmosphere of cosy familiarity, a feeling of solidarity and sympathy, a "we understand" and "you and I know" impression that irked his young opponent, since the real issues and the Judge's stand con-



cerning them were sedulously avoided. Nevertheless, Kellogg's chatty irrelevancies could not continue indefinitely, and finally he declared that the great Republican party was founded, not upon abolition, but upon opposition to slavery. He charged his fellow citizens to remember that, as a Republican and a loyal and patriotic American, he should be bound to support all the guarantees of the Constitution to the South and the enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Law. This last statement, lest it affright the Galesburg abolitionists, was cunningly concealed amid orotund generalities, but his opponent, straining at the leash, plucked it from its glittering sheath of sounding adjectives and filed it neatly away in his memory.

Judge Kellogg, warming to his work, then warned his audience that he himself was in no fashion an Abolitionist, a bold stroke, but that he considered the Missouri Compromise a sacred compact concerning which even Senator Douglas himself had uttered the noble words: "The Missouri Compromise is a sacred thing, canonized in the hearts of the people, which no ruthless band would ever be reckless enough to disturb. . . . And whose hand, whose hand, I ask you, but his own, has not only disturbed but destroyed it," continued the Judge in a sudden taurine roar that bred an answering yell in the audience. For some minutes Senator Douglas fared very ill and Bob was informed that he would experience no little difficulty in persuading not only the inhabitants of Galesburg but the entire voting population of the Fourth Congressional District to vote for him and thereby for the further extension of slavery.



At the conclusion of his address, Kellogg was cheered for some minutes, and it was the spoken opinion that, smart as he might be, the youngster from Peoria was up against it and no mistake. He rose as the shouting died and the shouters realized that, if Kellogg had the arguments, Ingersoll had the presence and the bearing. At twenty-seven Bob was the handsomest young man in the West. Broad-shouldered, with auburn hair and blue eyes and built with a powerful symmetry and heavy, smooth resiliency, he possessed a certain lucent candour of expression and grace of gesture alien in the orators, even the greatest, of the day. The speaking presence of men such as Douglas, while impressive, somewhat recalled the rococo port of Junius Brutus Booth, and while it dazzled was apt to dull the reasoning powers of those who listened. Lincoln alone spoke simply and without the glittering swoops and swirls indulged in by his contemporaries. Bob's method was an admirable amalgam of both fashions of forensic oratory. He embellished but never obscured the reasoning of his discourse, and his opening thrust against his honourable opponent, catching his audience on the point of relaxing, brought them immediately to a strained attention.

"The Fugitive Slave Law is the most infamous enactment that ever disgraced a statute book; the man who approves of or apologizes for that infamy is a brute!"

Galesburg gasped.

With incredulous delight, they gazed like folk entranced. Why, the man was an Abolitionist, one of themselves, a true-blue, dyed-in-the-wool Republican of the Republi-

cans. Older heads among them were agog with admiration. The yearling held the veteran checkmate at the very first go-off. In comparison to this profession of faith, Kellogg was nowhere.

Clark E. Carr, a young friend of Lincoln's and an important unit in the Republican organization who was in the course of a notable career to achieve distinction not only as a statesman but as an author and a diplomat, describes in his book *The Illini* the effect upon Lincoln's own legions of what followed this ringing *hallali*.

"He drew a picture such as none but him could paint of the horrors of slavery. Acknowledging the merits and eulogizing the virtues of Southern planters who were humane, he portrayed the cruelties that were inflicted in every slave state upon poor innocent human beings, whose only hope was in breaking away and escaping from their brutal masters and overseers. He took up the Fugitive Slave Law and showed that by its terms every white man and woman, North as well as South, was made to participate in the crime of slavery—that it was made a crime for a white man or woman to give the poor panting fugitive shelter, or a crust of bread, or a drop of water. He showed that under the Fugitive Slave Law it was made the duty of the United States marshal in pursuing a slave to summon a posse of citizens to assist him in the pursuit—to call upon any or all of us to leave our work and employment to join him; and that we must obey. He pictured a poor black woman with her child, her baby boy, whom she was hugging to her throbbing bosom, her only ambition to make him free, running by that hall and the United States marshal in close pursuit, summoning us to join in

the chase, and Judge Kellogg springing to his feet in obedience and calling upon these young men to join in the cruel chase, and hue and cry, and their finally succeeding in dragging the poor wretch back to slavery."

This picture, executed perhaps with a technique a trifle fulsome and with excessive chiaroscuros extremely distasteful to Judge Kellogg, nevertheless impressed not only Mr. Carr but his fellow Republicans of Galesburg as the most terrific indictment of slavery that they had yet heard, not excluding those of Lovejoy and Giddings, Beecher, Garrison, and Wendell Phillips.

Bob's opponent, his ruddy and impressive countenance dark with dismay, sat as one squashed. It was as though a wave of irresistible verbiage and cosmic size had picked him up bodily and slapped him with outrageous violence against the granite face of public opinion. He cursed his recent pronouncements touching the Fugitive Slave Law and the damnable ingenuity of his opponent with such violence that a gentleman sitting close by leapt a little in his seat and turned angrily toward a guiltless neighbour. He was, in fact, as the audience could plainly see, fit to be tied.

When in conclusion Bob swung his fine shoulders a little his way and thundered: "Judge Kellogg favours and approves all these horrors, for he distinctly avows himself to be in favour of the Fugitive Slave Law. And yet he is no worse than are all the trusted leaders of your boasted Republican party. Your Abe Lincoln himself, whose name is at the head of your ticket, distinctly declares himself in favour of the enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Law, as do all the Old Line Whigs who make up the warp

and woof of the Republican party," he betrayed such pent and boiling emotion that he appeared in danger of sudden dissolution.

He began to realize that David after all had not only not missed Goliath but had scored a bull's-eye. In a speech that had tied him up and knotted all ends securely, Bob had shown that Douglas's Popular Sovereignty alone could keep slavery out of Kansas, Nebraska, and other territories, and he had even given statistics showing that the populations of these were composed primarily of Northerners and that therefore they would, by popular vote, be free.

The Republicans of Galesburg, despite their candidate's ensuing remarks, would, had the polls been in that hour open and accessible, have voted to a man for Bob Ingersoll of Peoria. Judge Kellogg's finish, when he closed the debate, was, after Bob's eloquence, as milk is to brandy. There was no bite in his last desperate appeal. He was, he admitted to himself, beaten to a standstill by a boy scarce breeched with nothing but a local reputation and a golden voice. For young Ingersoll was possessed of a voice the equal of which, for range, texture, and modulation, he had never in a long experience of orators encountered. As the Republican candidate left Dunn's Hall, he reflected that young Ingersoll also had a brain and an extraordinarily handsome appearance. He was, in fact, taken all in all, far too good a man to be fooling away his time in the disrupted and discredited ranks of the Democratic party.

What a pity Lincoln hadn't got him, what a pity.

And what a damned thing it was that there were to be

about twenty of these cursed debates. Why, by that time Ingersoll would have the pick of his own stalwart Republicans following him around like the children who hung entranced at the heels of the Pied Piper of Hamelin.

Bad luck, bad luck.

But neither Judge Kellogg nor Bob had realized the fibre of the party that was behind Lincoln. Though Bob in every debate that followed outreasoned, outtalked, and outguessed his opponent, the voters of the Fourth Congressional District voted the straight Republican ticket in a body, and when in November, 1860, the lawyer of Sangamon was elected to the Presidency of the United States, Bob resumed his law practice in Peoria, a beaten but a well-known and popular figure in the politics of the state.

As for Senator Douglas, when Abe the Rail-splitter and twice the Giant-killer was inaugurated, he stood by and held Mr. Lincoln's hat.

Even his political enemies admired and respected the great Democratic candidate. In the parlance of the countrysides, "there warn't no flies on Steve."



## CHAPTER X

IN 1859, when in Peoria, Bob and Clark were diligently besieging success, a year before Bob's emergence as a public man and a power in Democratic Illinois and in the very hour of victory for those opposed to slavery, John Ingersoll, resident "without charge" in Belleville, St. Clair County, Ill., felt suddenly upon his shoulders and about his heart the hand of age. He was seven-and-sixty years old, though to those who knew and spoke with him he seemed as alert and powerful of mind and body as one twenty years his junior, but his sons could see that what had once been flame within him was now ashes and a feeble smouldering. His days had all of them been arduous, filled with misfortunes which were transmuted into an added fervour and sincerity in the profession of his faith, and persecutions borne courageously, beneath which his principles never wavered or were broken. Born in Vermont in the days when Puritanism still reared above the New England horizon its crabbed countenance and steeple hat, vast and shadowy, an inclement Manitou, he inherited in bone and fibre from a line of distinguished forbears a love for freedom, and in sad paradox, for tolerance, that clamoured always within him, were the precepts upon which he preached as savage as the heart and mind that compassed the slaughter of Servetus. His sermons were in themselves amalgams of advocated freedom and insistence upon slavery, freedom for the bodies



of slaves and slavery for the minds of freemen, but his sense of justice forbade a flawless consistency of belief, for Bob in later years wrote concerning his father that "he was grand enough to say to me that I had the same right to my opinion that he had to his. He was great enough to tell me to read the Bible for myself, to be honest with myself, and if after reading it I concluded it was not the word of God, that it was my duty to say so."

Herein John Ingersoll betrayed the preacher but redeemed the man, though it may be remarked that to his congregations he made no such statements, nor, had he done so, would his congregations have thanked him for it. In Bob's maturity, when he was riding the saddle of a fame well ribbed with hazards, when about his heels a whole army of enemies were giving loud and frequently slanderous tongue, it was the currency of this slander that the father had so abused and tormented the child that in abhorrence of the precepts of his parent he had embraced and continued in agnosticism. Like many another theory conceived and disseminated in a hate born of stark horror, this was the more untrue because in it were buried a few seeds of truth. John Ingersoll used his children with a rigorous and misguided discipline, but he loved them, and they, as they grew older, loved and admired and pitied John Ingersoll. In E. M. Macdonald's partisan study, "Col. Robert G. Ingersoll As He Is," there is quoted a letter written by the subject to a friend, refuting the statements at that time common change in the press:

"The story that the unkindness of my father drove me into Infidelity is simply an orthodox lie. The bigots, unable to meet my arguments, are endeavouring to dig

open the grave and calumniate the dead. This they are willing to do in defence of their infamous dogmas. . . . My father was a kind and loving man. He loved his children tenderly and intensely. He had one misfortune and that was his religion. He believed the Bible, and in the shadow of that frightful book he passed his life. He believed in the truth of its horrors, and for years, thinking of the fate of the human race, his eyes were filled with tears. . . . My father was infinitely better than . . . the religion he preached. And these stories about his unkindness are maliciously untrue. . . .”

There was but little question that his early environment bred in the son the spirit of revolt against a tyranny unwillingly but silently suffered by a multitude. Bob in later life was to lead no forlorn hope but an army that after his death was to find for its spokesmen intellectual men who would fight not from the lecture platform but from the pulpit. Many a farmer in Ohio and Illinois who sat under John Ingersoll was subconsciously an infidel, mute but not always cowed. Bob had the mind, the tongue, and the courage, and upon him not a few of these Presbyterian husbandmen came to pin their hopes. Clark, no less of an agnostic, felt that in a large measure those who shared sincerely the beliefs of his father might not profitably be reasoned with, and in consequence he never sought to do so, but he, too, was of his brother's company of pioneers. The astonishing tales placed in circulation by certain ministers made in their time no less interesting reading than those of Nick Carter, but they possessed a quality of virulence and hysteria lacking in the accounts of that intrepid character. Bob was wont

to sit at meat with his father, and when the latter strove to induce godliness into the table talk, would counter with coarse jests and mockery—so bellowed in stubborn reiteration one opponent. Another told of drunken blasphemies and parental tears, and still another of public disrespect and unfilial jibes. These commentators, together with their testimonies and true histories, ran in due time down a steep place into the sea, their passing for the most part not to be lamented save that in them were lost many notable and imaginative creators of a type of fiction never without a certain interest. John Ingersoll himself, had their fables been spun in his lifetime, would have met them with such a blasting choler as would have shaken these little men into negligible fragments, but when his last illness was upon him, their existence or the possibility that they might exist was not suspected.

John Ingersoll, in 1859, was far from being that colonel in the forces of Calvin that he had been in the days of his sons' early childhood and their boyhood in Ohio. Age and the process of reason had come in some fashion to breed doubts, and from these, convictions had developed, convictions far other than those cherished for a lifetime and prosecuted with all the sincerity of a spacious intellect. It was an evil hour for an old man to meet, a bitter time, that held, as in a crucible, faith and belief and cause, and these melted away into nothing to leave behind them neither the gold of a transmuted virtue nor that dross which is the guaranty that something, if only a base metal, has existed. In them there was nothing. There had always been nothing. There would always be nothing. Three decades of endeavour, of hardship,

of loss, for a cause based upon ignorance and the denial of wisdom. In his riven strength John Ingersoll could not bear to reject in its entirety the belief for whose content he had laboured and grown old, but with an agony almost physical, as though he was with his own hand amputating a limb, he relinquished the doctrine of damnation and repudiated that incredible hell the existence of which he had established for so many men and women. Little by little Jehovah dissolved, the sombre figure, immense and threatening as stormy skies, the beard as vast as forests, the mosaic brow and head. The massive and awful solidity of the conception yielded suddenly and fled away like clouds routed and scattered in the heavens by a great wind. The cosmic fist held in prophetic suspension above the atom of dust whirling in its orbit, the eternal threat of destruction and torment, vanished and was as though it had never been. A gentler Spirit came to exercise in John Ingersoll's existence a dominion more clement and more comforting. He came to behold in merriment no carnal sin, and in physical and mental agony no intrinsic virtue destined to be celestially rewarded. He ceased to read the faces of men to behold thereon the imprints of wrongdoings and transgressions especially forbidden by an omnipotent and merciless Judge, an angry and a jealous, whose pity was rigidly finite and whose tolerance none had ever expected nor had taught others to expect.

As the twilight of his days deepened and grew soft in anticipation of a long repose, the old pastor found implanted in his heart a great tenderness for humanity, a feeling of sympathy and understanding the more perfect

since it had been born so late. His fine eyes became more luminous and his countenance less stern. Upon Jehovah and His laws he ceased altogether to declaim, and he walked abroad in the little township of his residence hemmed round with a love now filial rather than that fearful and tremulous respect which in his prime had testified to his suzerainty.

There remained in his heart and upon his tongue only one doctrine of persecution and assault, and he advocated its acceptance with the ancient fire and the thunderous vehemence of his most potent days. Slavery he abominated, slavery was a stench in the nostrils of any righteous man, slavery was an iniquity, destined at the great compt to be scored and underscored by God, and its protectors and advocates condemned and punished for their deeds in its behalf. Though officially "without charge" in Belleville (name reminiscent of the days before the Western pilgrimage) he possessed a following but a trifle less considerable than were those of Lovejoy and Giddings, and during the Lincoln-Douglas debates, no man was more valiant than he in his espousal of Lincoln's cause or more contemptuous of Senator Douglas's, though he knew, none better, the jeopardy that in that day attended Abolitionists. As the desire for intellectual emancipation took root and flourished, that of physical freedom waxed in proportion, and there was no sign of senescence in his informal speeches against slave-owners and the institution that they nourished up to the very day that he turned his face, fearless as that of an old lion, toward the long slope and the ultimate rest.

Like a vessel that has stoutly sailed in all manner of



wrathful winds and seas but that finally is driven ashore and swiftly breaks up, belying the brave soundness of timber and construction in the celerity of its final dissolution, John Ingersoll, when he succumbed to the last malady, stayed not long a-fighting. It was not that his frame was become enfeebled or his strength decayed, but the will to continue alive had left him. He had done his trick like the steersman, working a straining vessel around Cape Horn, who is relieved of his task and becomes of a sudden very fain of his bunk, however hard. He regretted that he would die with slavery still abroad unsmitten in the land, but his faith could assure him that it would not prosper overlong, and as he lay, his great frame relaxed and his hand in that of his youngest son, his chief anxiety was to rejoin the woman who had died in the December twilight of a day twenty-four years before.

Bob, who had but a little time before welcomed his father come to visit him, now watched beside him as he went away again, this time for a space beyond the computation of any human. He was glad, for the serenity that slept upon his father's face was the sign manual of a new faith, a faith wherein the limitless ovens of hell played no part. He grieved, for the dying man, beneath the now-vanished cortex of intolerance, had loved him and had protected him when he had sought protection. In his mind, as upon a wheel, revolved the endless record of reminiscence, and among these memories loomed ever the tall figure of John Ingersoll. The episode of Ashbel Riggs, of the insistent Millerite, of Mr. Yancy with his joyless smile, of the wrestling blacksmith of North Madison, these and many more spun in Bob's brain, while the



hero of all of them breathed a little heavily beside him, his eyes, those splendid dark eyes with their yellow lights, fast closed.

A little time before he ceased to breathe, he turned his head upon the pillows, and in a voice suddenly grown full of its ancient melody, asked his son to read to him. . . . His voice died in a murmur as do those of the branches of great trees when the wind goes swiftly away. Bob picked up the Bible which with a volume of Plato lay upon a table by the bed. He opened it, but a gesture of the big white hand pendent from the coverlet arrested him.

“Not that, the other.”

Plato.

A discourse upon the immortality of the soul.

As Bob read, his father ceased to be, quietly, so quietly that for a little time the reader's voice continued to be heard in a room where none but himself could hear.

## CHAPTER XI

THE year 1860 proved to be a big year for Bob. Back in Peoria, after the Congressional campaign had fused into the great flame of Lincoln's election and a Republican victory, he applied himself anew to his law practice and found time to deliver in Pekin, Ill., the first anti-theological lecture of his career. His reputation as an orator, strengthened and developed by his debates with Judge Kellogg, ran ahead and gathered a multitude that packed the hall in which he spoke, a multitude that sat fascinated by the first oratorical presence of the time while not wholly comprehending the content of the discourse. The rhetoric of the day, one tinged heavily with a mellow grandeur, rolled upon Bob's tongue melodiously with semitones unknown to the stalwart townsmen and farmers who stared goggle-eyed and panted softly between periods of frenzied applause.

"We are standing on the shore of an infinite ocean whose countless waves, freighted with blessings, are welcoming our adventurous feet. Progress has been written on every soul. The human race is advancing."

In enraptured sympathy the audience sat forward in their seats.

"Forward, oh sublime army of progress, forward until law is justice, forward until ignorance is unknown, forward while there is a spiritual or temporal throne, forward until superstition is a forgotten dream, forward until the

world is free, forward until human reason, clothed in the purple of authority, is king of kings."

To the listening men and women the words were fine words, the thought a great thought if not soundly Republican, but the voice! The voice was pure gold, a broad ribbon of gold, smooth and shining, that lapped them round until each man among them felt himself to be that king and each woman his consort. They did not care to remark that much that was said was directly contrary to their pastors' teachings. Indeed, what if it was? What a voice, and its possessor was only twenty-seven years old. A mere child.

The new year was ushered in with strife, for the Douglas Democrats, restive beneath the continued enmity of the South, began little by little to realize that hard words were on the verge of becoming hard blows. Lincoln's inauguration found many of them Republicans and preparing to resent with a new truculence the charge that Douglas was a bastard Democrat and a bloody Abolitionist. April, 1861, promised to be exciting, though the old-line Republicans walked softly, avoiding dispute and praying for the crisis to pass safely. Lincoln, beset and sorely harried by office-seekers, looked wearily into the future with no hope for peace, since Major Anderson's strategic removal from Fort Moultrie to Sumter in Charleston Harbour, and the consequent uproar in the South, had shown him clearly what progress Secessionists had already achieved. Actually he had, even before his inauguration, lost the allegiance of seven states, and since forts, arsenals, custom houses, and other Federal property within the limits of the cotton states had been seized by

Secessionists by March 4th, upon the commencement of his term he controlled but four military posts of which the far from impregnable Sumter was one.

Even to Bob, no Lincoln man, and far from fully realizing the situation in Washington, it was evident that Sumter might not with wisdom be evacuated simply because Virginia considered its occupation by a garrison of United States soldiers to be a deadly insult. But Mr. Seward, incomprehensibly enough, seemed to agree with Virginia, and his suggestion for the pacification of the South was to declare war on Spain and France, thereby reawakening the national spirit. Even his ancient liegeman, Tom Hyer, began to sympathize somewhat with Mr. Lincoln as the Secretary of State's importunings became known. As Mr. Lincoln remained unconvinced by Mr. Seward and Sumter was still garrisoned, the early morning of April 12th found Charleston awake and warlike and the guns of Fort Johnson and the batteries of Point Cummings directed and active upon Anderson, and the American flag drooping, unstirred by any wind, above Sumter. At seven Sumter opened fire on Cummings Point and at a half after eight on Moultrie. The Civil War was in progress.

In Peoria the ace card of Democratic Illinois awoke, heard the news, and became in that hour a Republican. The Douglas men, led by Black Jack Logan, were enlisting in their hundreds, but the uniforms issued them were the blue and not the gray. The spring grew old and yielded place to summer, and on Sunday morning, July 21st, MacDowell, commanding about 30,000 men, at that time the largest body of troops ever at the disposition of an American general, attacked Joseph Eggleston Johnston,

the Confederate leader, at the stream called Bull Run on the Manassas Plains. In this battle Brigadier General Thomas J. Jackson won the sobriquet of "Stonewall," and after it MacDowell telegraphed concerning his troops that "the larger part of the men are a confused mob, entirely demoralized. They are pouring through this place in a state of utter disorganization."

It was, in the opinion of the North, a hard battle to lose. In Washington there were stout patriots who bel-  
lowed for Lincoln to resign and the Confederacy to be recognized.

But in the West there was less hysteria. Men enlisted and departed, organized companies of volunteers, and tried to keep their small sons, practising marksmanship in back lots, from fatally wounding themselves and the neighbours. In England *Punch* flippantly announced

"That with the South we've stronger ties  
Which are composed of cotton,"

querying—

"And where would be our calico  
Without the toil of niggers?"

but in Illinois, where grandfathers remembered the river Raisin, no one gave a damn for England and much less than that for Mr. Punch, so that no disaffection was thereby enkindled.

Bob, working days and nights, kept pace with his legal work and strove to organize not one but three companies of volunteers, but in the autumn there occurred an incident that was to prove of even more significance in his life



than these activities. A farmer of Peoria County whose pigs, like Mr. Robertson's cow in Ashtabula, cared for little in life save travel and a change of scene, returned one day to find them gone upon so long a journey that he could find them nowhere. After searching, it occurred to him that a thief had profited by the innocent vagabondage of his stock, and so he armed himself with one of Mr. Samuel Colt's new and excellent patent firearms with a six-barrelled rotating breech and proceeded to comb the district. Eventually he came to the community pound and heard therein noises perfectly familiar. He climbed the high board fence and beheld in the inclosure thus revealed to his scrutiny all his pigs and several that might be his. Descending at once, he had begun to rip away the boards in order to recover his property when the pound master appeared in a condition of no little passion and armed with a pick handle.

The ensuing dialogue was brief and sulphuric. The owner of the pigs made as if to continue his work on the pound fence. The pound master threatened with the pick handle, upon which the man so threatened straightened up, fumbled for an instant at his waistband and producing his revolver shot his opponent several times at point-blank range. He then made an aperture in the pound fence, collected his pigs, and drove them home, leaving the pound master on his face in the warm damp grass.

There followed an indictment for murder, and such was the feeling aroused among the members of the community that not a few of them publicly advocated an immediate execution without benefit of law. Bob, retained as coun-

sel for the defence, pointed out that any jury impanelled in the neighbourhood would hang his man defence unheard and asked for a change of venue. Bar and prisoner were consequently transported to Groveland, in Tazewell County.

In Groveland, upon the post road between Springfield and Peoria, stood the house known as the Parker Mansion, a spacious and hospitable place at which Lincoln and Leonard Swett, David Davis, and other men prominent in the history of Illinois had many times rested and made cheer. Benjamin Weld Parker and his wife, Harriette E. Lyon Parker, conducted the first and most popular salon of the West. Mr. Parker's mother, Sarah Buckman Parker, had preceded her son to Groveland, and though her husband was a descendant of Captain John Parker of Battle of Lexington fame, and a kinsman of Theodore Parker, the Unitarian divine, she soon became known in the 'thirties as an infidel although a charming one. Daughter of that Buckman who had been landlord of the Lexington Tavern where had gathered the minutemen, and descendant of Joseph Weld who had sheltered Anne Hutchinson in 1637 when she was declared banished from the Massachusetts Colony, Sarah Buckman Parker had from childhood been schooled in her devotion to a freedom not only physical but intellectual. An intelligent, even brilliant woman, she had in her youth made a careful study of comparative religions and in consequence had rejected them all. To the shocked amazement of orthodox Parkers she had thereupon become a disciple of none other than Bob's enthusiasm, Tom Paine. Her son, in this matter, as the saying was in rural Illinois, "follered

his ma," and his wife, a lady born and long resident in Newton Lower Falls, Massachusetts, had been, even before her marriage, ill-disposed toward orthodox beliefs. Thus, when in 1860 news of Bob's speech in Pekin came to the Parker Mansion, its host and hostess and the elder Mrs. Parker came to look upon Bob as a brilliant and kindred spirit whose acquaintance they much desired. Bob, established for a tumultuous period in Groveland and engaged in the somewhat difficult pursuit of clearing the owner of the vagrant pigs, received an invitation to dine at the big house upon the post road and went forthwith, for the Parker dinners, like Crabb Robinson's breakfasts, provided the best talk and wit. food and wines to be had anywhere.

Cordially received, he found that Mr. Parker had heard, that forenoon in the crowded courtroom, his defence of his client. He observed, in a library unique in the West for the variety and excellence of its contents, shelves devoted to Thomas Paine and to Voltaire. At dinner he sat at the right hand of a singularly beautiful girl whose face held like a pale clear flame a superb serenity of expression and who conversed as though all her life she had joined in the conversation of great men. Her eyes were very lucent and very deep. Bob's interest and participation in the talk became less and less vital as the courses came and went. He ignored notable dishes and barely tasted a vintage wine of great merit. He sat and looked profoundly interested, but his eyes scarce wavered once from his neighbour's face. When she addressed him, he was caught unawares and experienced difficulty in applying his mind to her question, for it was concentrated upon

the perfect felicity of line and contour expressed in her countenance and in the delicate poise of her head. Though conscious of the scrutiny of Illinois' most distinguished young lawyer, the girl betrayed no manner of shyness or embarrassment. There was something delectable in her composure. After dinner Bob considered his perfectly fragrant cigar with boredom and distaste, and when the company of gentlemen present, led by Mr. Parker, joined the ladies, he went with alacrity.

He posted himself in a position as nearly adjacent as possible to his recent table companion and commenced immediately to converse. Afterward he had no clear idea of what had been the subject of his remarks, but it booted little since they had permitted him to look almost continually in the face of the girl. He talked for a long time and was vaguely aware that her beauty seemed to destroy the continuity of his thoughts. When he left at an hour not unseasonably early, he turned suddenly to his host who had seen him to the door and thanked him for a delightful evening. A most delightful evening! Aided into his greatcoat, he turned again and in an urgent tone begged an answer to a very important question.

"Who, Mr. Parker, who is the young lady beside whom I had the honour to sit at dinner?"

A certain anxious excitement in Mr. Ingersoll's countenance awoke a smile on Mr. Parker's.

"Why, that was my daughter Eva."

"Ah, thank you. Your daughter—— Thank you again."

He was driven off into the night.

He was, however, back next day to pay his respects to

Mr. and Mrs. Parker, and he held some conversation with Miss Eva. The day after and the day after that he was again at the Parker Mansion. In November, he found that his work suffered from an inability to concentrate. December discovered him acutely dissatisfied with the life of a man without a home and fireside. In January, he proposed himself to Miss Eva and was accepted. On February 13th, disregarding the current superstition, Bob and Eva A. Parker were married in the Parker Mansion while two thirds of the state drank the health of Honest Bob Ingersoll and his bride in the only good thing that, so it was said, had ever come out of the South and even it was named after a royal family of European dominion.

Bob rode such a wave of happiness that for a time he completely forgot the existence of a war. His wife was, he found, "a woman without superstition." She loved him. The thought was in itself an inspiration, a sedative, an intoxicant, a challenge to the world.

But if for a time Bob forgot the war, the war did not long delay in recalling itself to his attention. Four months before his marriage, and indeed almost before he came to be acquainted with the Parkers, he had been commissioned colonel of the Eleventh Illinois Cavalry by Richard Yates, governor of the state. This regiment, in conjunction with a gentleman named Basile P. Meek, he had been given permission to raise, and it was composed entirely of volunteers, twelve full companies, strapping young men from prairie farms and lithe, soft-spoken youths from the towns, of that type from which, a handful of years before, Jack Logan had recruited his followers. These were to a man excellent pistol shots, notable billiard players, sea-



soned drinkers, and hard riders, and of a mettle most suitable to battles. At Camp Lyon, on November 1st, the recruits had begun to pour in, and by December 20th the regiment, Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll commanding, was mustered into the service of the United States and mounted. Bob, in fourteen brass buttons and shoulder straps impressively gleaming, became the most popular officer in the West, and not even the dashing Black Jack controlled more devotion among his men. In uniform, moustached and lightly bearded after the manner of the third Napoleon, a much-admired sovereign in Illinois, he was considered by those who had volunteered to serve under him not only the best soldier but the handsomest under arms. It was also the opinion of the Eleventh Illinois that if there existed a smarter body of cavalry than they were on either side, it had not yet been heard from.

On February 22, 1862, a bare nine days after the marriage of its commander, the regiment fell in and marched away from Camp Lyon, overland to Benton Barracks, near St. Louis in Missouri.

In the meanwhile, Mr. Lincoln had been subjected to severe perplexities. Mr. Seward had for the nonce ceased to suggest, which was no small benison, but Simon Cameron of Pennsylvania, though he had proved staunch at the Chicago Convention, failed to develop as a great or even useful Secretary of War. In fact, he was guilty, not only of maladministration, but of that brand of presumption hitherto peculiar only to Mr. Seward. Having suggested in his report to the President of December 1, 1861, that all slaves should be armed against their masters and,

when thus enlisted as soldiers, that they be freed, he thereupon neglected to submit this report to his chief, mailing it instead to the postmasters of all large cities with the appended instruction to deliver it to the press as soon as the President's message was read in Congress. Mr. Lincoln, when this astonishing measure was brought to his attention, was, in his own words, "considerably riled." On January 11th, he wrote Mr. Cameron a brief note dismissing him from his post and appointing him Minister to Russia, and immediately filled the vacancy thus created by appointing, as Secretary of War, Edwin M. Stanton of Pennsylvania.

This appointment was, as many people in Washington including Mr. Seward afterward realized, thoroughly typical of Mr. Lincoln. It was contrary not only to the rules of the great game of politics, but to human nature as most Republicans and Democrats understood it.

In the first place, Edwin M. Stanton was a Democrat and the Republicans were in power. In the second place, he had been extremely outspoken in his contempt for the President's abilities and in his private correspondence had referred to the "painful imbecility of Lincoln." And yet the imbecile appointed him Secretary of War and seemed to turn a deaf ear to the furtive little men whose business it seemed to be to repeat to those in office the hard things that others were saying of them.

Mr. Stanton proved to be the greatest war minister in the history of the United States, William Tecumseh Sherman at one time to the contrary, but the shock of his appointment left a bruise that was a long time a-healing in the feelings of the Grand Old Party.

On January 10th, a day before Simon Cameron's dismissal, Mr. Adams wrote to Mr. Seward and remarked that he felt "that one clear victory at home might perhaps save us a foreign war." Almost immediately General Grant and Flag-officer Foote succeeded in giving the American Ambassador to England what he wanted, for, having secured the permission of General Halleck, commander of the Department with headquarters at St. Louis, whither Bob's regiment of cavalry was shortly to report, these two officers reduced Fort Henry on the Tennessee River and Fort Donelson on the Cumberland, thereby forcing both gateways to the Confederate Southwest. These signal victories enabled England to pick her winner but aroused astonishing jealousy in the bosoms of Bob's commander in chief, Halleck, and the excellent theoretical soldier, General McClellan. Though Richmond was plunged in gloom and Washington in festivities, Halleck telegraphed to McClellan that "General Grant left his command without any authority and went to Nashville. I can get no returns, no reports, no information of any kind from him. Satisfied with his victory, he sits down and enjoys it without any regard to the future. I am worn out and tired with this neglect and inefficiency." The commander in chief of all the armies of the United States, far from ignoring Halleck's urgent petulancies and congratulating Grant, wired in reply:

"Do not hesitate to arrest Grant at once if the good of the service requires it, and place C. F. Smith in command."

C. F. Smith, had he known of this suggestion, would not have been pleased, for he was, unlike Halleck, not a

map soldier but a fighting officer who had led the decisive charge at Donelson and whose admiration for Grant was active and enthusiastic. Nevertheless, the commander in chief of the Department of Missouri continued incessantly garrulous, and on receipt of McClellan's dispatch replied that "A rumour has just reached me that since the taking of Fort Donelson General Grant has resumed his former bad habits" and "I do not deem it advisable to arrest him at present but have placed General Smith in command of the expedition up the Tennessee." The rumour that Grant had been drinking, retailed to headquarters by Bob's commanding officer, was utterly without foundation, and General Smith, deserving of a happier fate, was sent up the Tennessee to die, but Halleck, his professional jealousy somewhat allayed, was alive and unscathed to number the Eleventh Illinois Cavalry among his forces when, on April 1st, that regiment landed at Shiloh ready to take part in the western offensive.

Bob's sojourn with his command at Benton Barracks had been barren of exciting incident, and his honeymoon had run its brief course undisturbed by alarums. The men had been drilled and organized, practised in their profession and well hardened, so that, when they embarked on March 26, 1862, for Pittsburg Landing, they were, save for their baptism of fire, veteran and experienced troops. Bob made of his farewells to his wife short but poignant work. Eva returned home from St. Louis. Her demeanour remained singularly valiant, but the expression in her eyes possessed none of the serenity of yore. When the transports had disappeared from the river, she turned away gaily enough, as though there lived in her heart no

manner of anxiety or fear, but in her room at the hotel she lay for hours face downward upon her bed, about her heart a terror that squeezed slowly with an icy pressure. She had been married just six weeks.

At Pittsburg Landing, better known to Americans in after years as Shiloh, General Halleck assumed command of the armies of the West.\* The first battalion of the Eleventh Illinois disembarked at Crump's Landing, where it joined the forces of General Lew Wallace, and the remainder of the regiment under Bob proceeded to Pittsburg Landing and, with General Prentiss's division, eventually encamped two miles from headquarters. Lew Wallace had been before Donelson, occupying the centre of the Federal line, and his men to an individual were, like many of Prentiss's, compared to Bob's boys, as hard-bitten a body of troops as any in the world. From them the long lads from the prairies of Illinois heard tales of war that made away swiftly with overconfidence and conceit. They were told, for instance, that the theory that one Yank could lick ten Rebs with his bare hands, twenty with a cavalry sabre, and three companies fully accoutred, was in effect a theory only, and that, ten times out of twelve, five Rebs were just as good as if not better than two Yanks. There were even a few cynical veterans in the army of the future author of *Ben Hur* who observed

Head Qrs. 6th Division  
Army of West Tennessee  
April 11th, 1862.

*Genl Order*

Colonel Ingersoll of the 11th Illinois Cavalry will furnish two full companies of Cavalry to report for duty at these Head Quarters immediately

By order of

COL. F. QUINEN 12th, Mic.  
Acting Brig Genl 6th Division A of W T.



that a Reb was as mean a fighter as a Yank, man for man, but these were not popular with the Eleventh Illinois. They were further informed that Unconditional Surrender Grant was the best general in the whole durned nation except maybe old Lew, and that inexperienced officers were doing more to help Jeff Davis than Lee and the hull lot of them. The Eleventh Illinois were not as a whole particularly nimble witted, but a lie was a damned lie and an insinuation as offensive as a punch on the nose. In general, they were big strong boys, and for three days every veteran of Fort Henry and Fort Donelson who made this remark found his hands full of a little war of his own and not infrequently was carried away by his comrades, spitting teeth and sombre prophecies. The Peoria County farmers and billiard players were fighting first, last, and all the time for their friend, fellow townsman, and commanding officer, Honest Bob Ingersoll. After that they were defending Illinois, Abe Lincoln, sometimes of Sangamon County in that state, and the Republican party, and lastly the United States, and they were teetotally blasted if insults could be flung upon any of these causes and most especially the first.

The First Battalion of the Eleventh Illinois did a lot of fighting at Crump's Landing as did their comrades downstream, but five days after they arrived there it ceased to be with their fists.

## CHAPTER XII

ON APRIL 5, 1862, General Beauregard, addressing a council of war held in the Confederate Camp four miles from Grant's sentinels, observed with prophetic gravity of demeanour, "Gentlemen, we sleep in the enemy's camp to-morrow." With Hardee, Bragg, and Breckinridge, he had come in a storm of wind and rain along the road from Corinth, Grant's objective, and confronted the army of the Union before Grant and his captious chief Halleck were aware of his initial movements. Grant was at his headquarters at Savannah, Sherman with his division behind Shiloh Meetinghouse, Prentiss with McClernand's division behind his right lay across the Corinth road, and Hurlbut and W. H. L. Wallace of Illinois, both commanding divisions, were encamped near the river in the rear. Such was the disposition of the Federal forces on April 6th. Lew Wallace and a part of Bob's command were at Crump's Landing and, delayed by misinformation, did not get into action until the 7th. On April 8th, while Beauregard's shattered columns were staggering through the sleet back along the Corinth road, while Grant's men were burying dead men and burning dead horses, Bob wrote to Clark a brief dispatch touching the fortunes of the battle of Shiloh.

Seat of War,  
April 8th, 1862.

DEAR BRO.

There have been two days of awful terrible battle, the most terrible I ever conceived of—a perfect Austerlitz—I escaped unhurt—was not even wounded in the slightest. The enemy on Monday were completely routed. We lost 4 killed, one 1st Lieut. Dick Byrnes killed—Lieut. Davis wounded in the shoulder—not dangerously—and 20 wounded and missing. We lost killed and wounded so as to be entirely worthless, 66 horses. I will write you at length to-night—giving you the details. Send word to my wife.

Love to all,  
Yours forever,  
R. G. INGERSOLL.

The engagement on April 6th had been in effect a Confederate victory, as Hardee had surprised Sherman and partially destroyed his command before that general had been fully apprised of the approach of the enemy. Prentiss and his division had been subsequently crushed, the General being made prisoner, and soon afterward General W. H. L. Wallace was killed. The Federal forces, their backs to a swollen river, were beaten men when on the 7th Lew Wallace and Buell came up upon its farther shore with reinforcements. The Confederates, disheartened by the appearance of fresh enemy troops and the death of Albert Sidney Johnston, their general in command, had fought valiantly but in vain in the gray dawn of that day against the howling attack of Wallace's veterans, and in the

afternoon had fallen back toward Corinth, actually in utter and frenzied demoralization.

Grant had sought to follow and capture these remnants of the army of Beauregard but the incredible Halleck had appeared, taken over the supreme command, and so caused the army to loiter that the Confederates were enabled to recuperate and prepare for further battle.

The 6th had been a Sunday and it was in the dawn of it that those battalions of the Eleventh Illinois under Bob at Pittsburg Landing got their first taste of war. Awakened as it grew light by rifle fire in the direction of Shiloh Meetinghouse, Bob was in front of his tent buckling on his cavalry sabre when an orderly from Prentiss's headquarters appeared breathless in the company street and, checking his running horse with difficulty, dismounted in a tumbling rush before him.

"General Prentiss's compliments to the Colonel and will the Colonel dispatch two companies of cavalry at once to headquarters?"

Excitement caused his speech to pop like firecrackers.

Bob, acknowledging a sweeping salute, shouted to his adjutant as his officers appeared from under canvas and ran toward him:

"Major Puterbaugh and Major Sanderson, you will take two companies and ride in to General Prentiss's headquarters at once."

The adjutant, who had been shaving, appeared unsymmetrically whiskered and was ordered to mount the remaining ranks, to distribute ammunition, and to order the mule teams up from the river to remove all baggage. Puterbaugh and Sanderson shook hands with their

colonel, then with each other, and rode away down the road, their men following in columns of twos in an impressed and nervous silence. Profanity from the river bank drifted to Bob's ears as disgruntled mules were forcibly laid hold of. Those remaining of the Eleventh Illinois stood at ease beside their mounts, drawn up in company fronts, and hearkened with awe as renewed rifle fire left a bristling echo in the still, early morning air.

Bob, mounted, watched a series of woolly balls appear in the sky over the meetinghouse tower, and star swiftly into gauzy dissolution. The road that led in that direction was now bare of Puterbaugh's and Sanderson's commands, but quite suddenly activity was discernible upon it where it led away into the woods. As upon an unrolling carpet of dust, two horsemen, flat on their horses' necks, clove the distance and middle distance and bore down upon Bob and his captains. Lying back in their saddles these frantic jockeys pulled up in a slither of hooves. One commenced to shout, a thumb jerking over his shoulder:

"The Rebs have flattened Sherman and right now they's shooting General Prentiss all to pieces."

Startled, he checked himself to observe more closely a spreading stain upon his thigh, and his horse profited by this to collapse a little on its legs and then to fall sideways with a loud thump upon the ground. One leg pinned beneath it, its rider lay passive, his glance still holding the startled eyes of his colonel.

Bob's mouth was dry.

"Is he dead?"



The recumbent's one companion denied this. All feeling of rank or subordination seemed to have left him.

"Naw, skeert. Horse is, though. Say, we run like jackrabbits."

He drew with his palm a smear of dust diagonally across his face.

"Attention!"

"Beggin' the Colonel's pardon. General Sherman's plumb licked and General Prentiss ain't anywhere at all now and we ain't all that run."

This fact was immediately apparent. Accompanied by the roar of cannonading, what appeared to be the entire Union army with its artillery and baggage appeared like a blue flood upon the road and rolled rapidly down upon the Eleventh Illinois that, drawn up across it, dammed all passage. Behind him Bob heard a captain cock a pistol.

"By ——, it's a rout," the man said as he turned.

"Hold fast there, boys. Got to get these men back into ranks."

Eddying between the horses of his men, the runaways, wounded and whole, beat each other and swore themselves into calmness. On their heels, they discovered, there were no yelling men in gray and none appeared upon the road whence they had come. Angry at having discredited themselves in the eyes of an alien organization, they fell into some sort of ranks, speaking abusively to the mounted non-commissioned officers of the Eleventh Illinois who herded them as shepherd dogs herd sheep. At Bob's command, as order was wrought, his men resolved themselves into columns of twos and, at a hand trot, he led them down the road toward the meetinghouse.

The air around them grew louder. Bob thought of Eva and hoped that he had loaded his navy sixes, as ahead he beheld a great mushroom of smoke expanding behind the trees. At the edge of a field dotted sparsely with the stumps of the trees whose fellows beyond it formed a wall of shadow, Bob threw up a hand. Leaden balls of various sizes were clipping through the forest so that a constant curtain of new greenery was falling. Deploying, the Eleventh Illinois invested the near edge of the clearing and disengaged carbines. Lieutenant Byrnes of Company F, bringing his weapon to his shoulder, spun sideways toward his horse and fell at its forefeet as a Minié ball traversed his chest. Farther down the line a private of the same company opened his mouth wide in a yell which nobody heard as a twelve-pound iron shot tore a leg away. The Eleventh Illinois were finding out about war.

An orderly came to Bob with an order to re-form in the rear of the Fifth Ohio just as a stump twenty paces to the Colonel's front split suddenly up into shards that fell, smoking, to the ground. In the rear of the Fifth Ohio the enemy's fire was no less insistent, and it was rumoured in the early afternoon that by twilight the game would be up. The entire Union army, forming a semicircle about Pittsburg Landing, was being pushed back and in toward a river in spring spate. At four Bob learnt that Buell and Lew Wallace were coming up, and his men seemed to take heart. They had fought all day with great courage and a stubbornness astonishing in troops so new, but as the shifting lines of gray seemed never to diminish, they be-

came discouraged. At five, the enemy fire slackened and died away, leaving the Union army congregated within a space of 400 acres, its rear ranks practically in the torrent of the Tennessee.

Beauregard departed to wire his triumph to Richmond and to prepare to accept Grant's surrender on the morrow, while Bob lay awake all night watching the thin blue arches traced in the drizzling sky by the shells flung from Grant's gunboat in the direction of the Confederate encampment. The tents and baggage of the Eleventh Illinois furnished comfort that night to men of the bereaved division of the slain Confederate General, Albert Sidney Johnson, so that Bob's men, now blooded and experienced, slept damply or not at all.

Before midnight a drenched scout reported to Union Headquarters that Buell was come up at last on the other side of the river and was crossing his men. In the dawn of the seventh, Old Lew, with the 1st battalion of the Eleventh Illinois in his division, appeared from Crump's Landing, and later the Confederates, attacking, found themselves attacked and swept away. Bob advanced his men for more than six hours, slowly, but quite steadily. At four in the afternoon the gray lines broke and the firing died away toward the southwest. The Eleventh Illinois bivouacked on the field and, by its colonel's fire, a bumper of rye whisky was drunk to the valorous performance of the soldier citizens of Peoria. In retrospection, Bob's impressions of Shiloh were not lacking in colour. On April 11th, describing the battle to Clark, he spared neither vigour nor detail.

Seat of War,  
April 11th, 1862.

A few days ago I promised to write you a description of the Great Battle. . . .

. . . We . . . advanced toward where the battle seemed raging, about one mile, and formed in line of battle on the edge of an open field.

The shot and shell were tearing through the woods at this point in the most fearful manner. Trees as large as my body were shattered in pieces and great limbs came crashing around where we were formed. . . . The Rebels were driving our forces. We had been taken by surprise. The cavalry could be of no use unless the enemy were routed, so we were ordered to keep falling back but always to be near enough our line of battle to be of use if the enemy should retreat. And so all day long we slowly retreated and anxiously watched the greatest battle ever fought on this continent.

The enemy were at least twenty-five thousand strong, about the same number of effective men that we had, though this is necessarily guesswork. The line of battle extended six or seven miles and formed a crescent opposite the centre of which, about three miles, was Pittsburg Landing. The roar of the guns was almost deafening. No thunder that I ever heard was at all comparable to this. Hundreds of cannon and in the neighbourhood of two hundred thousand muskets were discharged simultaneously and incessantly. There was no lull, no pause. They did not even wait a moment as great storms do to gather fresh strength, but the Rebels rushed on with the fury of hell and our soldiers disputed every bloody inch

with more courage and more dauntless desperate heroism than I before imagined possessed by men. But after all we steadily fell back and the enemy as steadily advanced for twelve dreadful bloody hours.

All day long we had heard that Buell was coming, all day our soldiers had been supported by this belief. All day long thousands of eyes had anxiously looked for the promised coming. All day long they had expected to see over the river emerging from the great woods the sacred flag. And at last it was seen. At last Buell did come—along the river, along the Point and along the bleeding, wavering lines ran the cry, “Buell has come.” And high over the volleys of musketry, over the roar and boom of the guns rose the cheers of a hundred thousand tired and desperate men.

Buell’s forces were quickly crossed. They manned our guns and rushed to the support of our lines. And in a few moments the terrible advance of the enemy was stayed, and along the whole of the lines firing ceased, and as though by common consent both armies lay down upon the terrible bloody field surrounded by thousands of dead and wounded and slept upon their arms.

That night the Rebels occupied our tents and we lay upon our arms. The rain fell all night, slowly and sadly, as though the heavens were weeping for the dead. All night long I stood with my blanket around me, drearily by the side of a dead tree watching the shells of the gun-boat. Every fifteen minutes would come a flash like heat lightning—then the boom—then the bluish line bending over the distant wood—then the roar of the bursting, and then last of all the double echo gradually dying



over the far hills. During the whole night with perfect regularity the shells were thrown, and as we afterwards ascertained, doing terrible execution. Through the night our men had not been idle. The remainder of Buell's force had crossed, Genl. Wallace marched up the river with six thousand men and marched all night.

The enemy supposed we were thoroughly beaten so that they were ordered to destroy nothing as they were to take all themselves. (Beauregard had in fact telegraphed to Richmond a shout of victory.) They also thought that our forces were crossing the river under the protection of our gunboats. On Monday morning a little after daylight the battle was renewed, but, thank God, we commenced the attack. For two hours the battle raged almost as terribly as on Sunday and then, this was the most glorious moment of my life, the enemy commenced falling back. Our attack was sustained admirably the whole length of the lines but we gained ground slowly. Hundreds of wounded were continually coming to the boats. Some supported by their comrades and some more dreadfully wounded were carried in those heart-sickening cots. At four o'clock cheer after cheer went up from our forces. The enemy had not only fallen back, had not only retreated, but were flying in the wildest confusion. The day was ours. The great Battle for the Union had been fought. The greatest, the bloodiest in American history, and had been won by the gallant sons of the Grand West.

I shall write again in a few days.

Your aff. bro.

ROBERT.

N. B. Do not let any of this in the papers in any form.

N. B. Owing to the fact that the battle was fought in the woods the cavalry could be little used. During Monday, however, out of the stragglers that had left their regts. we formed two regiments and sent them to the lines and we effectually stopped three stampedes. Our boys were good pluck with the exception of a few privates that ran the first fire almost and did not get back for three days. I am satisfied with what the regt. did and the manner they behaved. We lost four killed, one 1st Lieut., twenty wounded and missing and had sixty-seven horses killed or wounded so as to be worthless.

I think the loss of our army on Sunday and Monday was not less than 20,000 killed and wounded. The Rebels' loss probably about the same.

The actual losses were 10,000 men for Beauregard and 15,000 for Grant. To the astonishment of the Eleventh Illinois and not a few other volunteer regiments the Civil War was not to end in the damp woods and soggy fields of Shiloh. On April 17th Bob wrote to Clark that General Mitchell had intercepted a telegram from "Beauregard to Jeff Davis in which he says—the enemy 150,000 strong are at Pittsburg. Unless I am immediately reinforced I must evacuate Corinth." Such indeed was to be the next move of the Confederate commander, but owing to Halleck's cryptic planning the engagements that prefaced the evacuation were to be almost as sanguinary as those of Shiloh. In the meantime, life was not without spice even in camp. Rumours as unpalatable yet as widely believed as those published as news in the journals

of both the North and the South awoke with the men every morning and remained in active circulation until all slept again. On April 24th Bob writes to Clark that

"We have a perfect substitute for papers here in the shape of camp rumour. Camp rumour can out-lie all the papers in the world and is the only thing that can. For instance, one day we hear that Pope has taken Memphis, another that McClellan has surrendered his whole command at Yorktown, another that Jeff Davis has sued for peace. Again, that Lincoln had said that the war had been prosecuted long enough without accomplishing anything but to convince him that our cause was hopeless and that in spite of all our efforts the Southern Confederacy would have to be recognized. And then we hear all about England having sent a fleet to break the blockade.

"And more of horrible and awful  
Which e'en to name wad be unlawful!"

"So you see that with us newspapers are nearly useless. Your lies may be better written, better worded, but they are no larger than ours. We have one more advantage. We can lie to suit ourselves. We are not confined to the stupid brains of one or two little editors but the consolidated brains of nearly two hundred thousand men manufacture our Munchausen and Gulliver literature."

The first of May found the army moving on Corinth by roads almost impossible of passage, and Bob supplies his brother with a brief description indicative of the temper of the Federal forces. It is May 5th.

"It is now about five o'clock and it is again clouding up. The rain will come again all the blessed night long. The

roads are already so bad that another flood could make them no worse. From here to Pittsburg Landing some twelve or fourteen miles the road is perfectly blockaded with artillery, baggage, mules, women, niggers, and sutlers. Every wagon is in the mud to the hubs and there is cussing and swearing enough on that road every fifteen minutes to send a world to hell."

On May 9th, seven miles from Corinth and the enemy, he writes again:

"You probably see in the papers an occasional paragraph or notice stating 'that were it not for certain items being declared contraband etc. they could a tale unfold but still all loyal citizens will be greatly pleased in a very short time.' These paragraphs are probably written by persons never at this place and who are in no manner connected with this army. Half you see with regard to skirmishes and scouting parties, taking prisoners, never occurred except in the papers and the other half are exaggerated to a wonderful degree. I have seen flaming accounts of skirmishes in which I was engaged myself and ninety-nine hundredths was a regular lie and the other hundredth stretched like damnation. . . . All I can say, because it is all I know, is that the whole army is advancing on Corinth and that we are fortifying as we go and fortifying splendidly." And in closing: "Send the copy of Shakespeare as soon as you can."

Beauregard evacuated Corinth during the night of May 29th without firing a shot, so that Halleck's scouts in the morning of the 30th, sent to "feel out" the enemy, found that there was none to "feel out." Grant with Beauregard in his hands after Shiloh had been deprived by

Halleck of almost certain and overwhelming success. On June 9th, Bob wrote at length to Clark, voicing what must have been prevailing opinion in the Grand Army of the Tennessee:

“I can hardly tell with what feelings the news [of the evacuation] was recd. by the army. For myself I was glad. I considered the evacuation at least a great moral victory for the North. It seems improbable that the Southern people can long repose confidence either in themselves or generals; though constantly claiming victories, they are as constantly driven back. State after state slips from their grasp. City after city has been abandoned by their flying armies. Certainly the loss of cities and states cannot long be kept from the people, and will they not when they learn how terribly and fearfully they have been cajoled, will they not once more turn to the Stars and Stripes and seek law, order, peace and security beneath its hallowed folds?”

Further on Pope's casual administration of the pursuit, calculated to strike terror into the hearts of Bragg's command far southward at Tupelo, aroused his criticism.

“While we were in ‘pursuit’ as it is very soberly called, we took about fifty prisoners, i. e. most of them came to us and gave themselves up. The pursuit taken as a whole is a most miserable failure. I do not believe that Pope has actually taken 20 men prisoners with arms in their hands. All the telegraphic reports you see about Pope's taking ‘more prisoners than he knows what to do with’ are all damned lies. He has done nothing. A pursuit planned by idiots and carried out by infantry without legs would have been equally successful. In fact, I believe he would



have caught them quicker if he had gone the other way."

The army continued to invest Corinth throughout the summer, while at Ripley in Mississippi, Bragg, reinforced by Price and Van Dorn, prepared to strike a counter blow. As Corinth was a commanding point at the intersection of the Charleston & Memphis, Mobile & Ohio railways, it was imperative that the Confederates possess it else their cause was seriously jeopardized. From the Federal encampment Bob wrote on August 3d to Clark. Save for occasional skirmishing there was little toward:

"To-morrow morning we start upon a little expedition to Pocahontas. It will, I presume, amount to but little, as the object of it, I understand, is only to break up some 'Guerilla' band. You see they suddenly appear a hundred or two strong, make a little dash on a bale of cotton or a railroad bridge, then disband, hide their guns, bury their ammunition and then pretend to be Union men—and we generally believe all they say. I think none of the enemy to amount to anything in this vicinity. Bragg, I believe, has gone to Arkansas. Price is in command, I believe, at Tupelo, probably engaged in drilling the conscripts. Over forty thousand of the rebels, we are informed, have recently gone to Richmond. I expect the next battle will be fought for Washington. I think the Rebels have evacuated Richmond, that is as a base of operations, and have made up their minds to carry the war north."

And in a postscript of singularly tender beauty he bids his brother to look well to his health.

"You are telling me to be careful, etc. Now, dear brother, be careful, infinitely careful yourself. If you should die the world to me would be dark, dark and forever.

I hope that we may be allowed to spend many happy years together without a bitter feeling or an unkind word. There is nothing I would not do for you, nothing but what I would freely give, even my life for you."

In the meanwhile, at home in Illinois, the supporters of the Union were experiencing troublous days. A so-called constitutional convention held in Springfield on January 7, 1862, the members of which, seventy-five in number, were forty-five of them Democrats and only twenty-one Republicans (seven were classed as fusionists, and two as doubtful) had drawn up an extraordinary document asserting in part "not only their supremacy over the Constitution, but their independence of existing laws as well, by instructing the State auditor in regard to his official duties in issuing bank notes; by ratifying a proposed amendment to the Constitution of the United States, denying the power of Congress to abolish or interfere with slavery in any state, notwithstanding the amendment had been submitted by Congress to the State Legislature." Submitted to the people for ratification, this instrument was decisively rejected, but the fact of its existence betrayed the disaffected, even treasonous, temper of the majority of Illinois Democrats. The Democratic State Convention was held in the following September, on the 10th, the Republicans convening on the 24th. At the Union Convention, as this last was called in order to impress upon the citizens of Illinois its principles and the cause which its nominees would support, Ebon Clark Ingersoll was nominated for Congressman-at-large. Previous to his nomination Clark had publicly declared upon the stand which, if nominated and elected,

he would take. Touching his reported speech Bob wrote to him from Corinth on September 22d:

MY DEAR BRO.

To-night I read the *Chicago Tribune* of the 20th ult. I glory in the position you have taken. The present Democratic party are like the damned Jews under Moses. They are longing for the "fleshpots" of slavery. They think that if the people of the South are thoroughly estranged and conquered, then good-bye to office because they will be without friends in the North—and their Southern allies will be too contemptible and weak to secure the election of their Northern traitorous Confederates. The effect of the Springfield Convention is to throw cold water upon the present enthusiasm of the North. It is a fire in the rear. It dampens the ardour of the army. It is merely a voice for a humiliating peace, and the price they propose to pay for peace is the Honour of the North. Progress must get down upon its knees before barbarism. The glorious nineteenth century must do homage to the dark ages. Humanity pays its respects to outrage and murder. The best government in the world apologizes to the most bloodthirsty anarchy of the world. The Church bows to the penitentiary and says, "Excuse me. I hope I have not offended."

Slavery is dead and the quicker we recognize that fact and the sooner we act upon it the shorter will be the horrid career of the Southern Confederacy. To be true to the North we must be for her institutions. As long as the South remained in the Union we were bound to protect to a certain degree her institutions. She has waived all

her rights under that instrument [the Constitution]. The Constitution is derided and defied.

The North is released from the obligation. The North now has the right and it is her duty to act according to the dictates of humanity, of necessity. She has no right to acknowledge property in man. It is not her duty to protect the institutions of an enemy even if they are good. If bad it is her imperative duty to destroy them. Slavery is unspeakable, detestable. Destroy it!

I am proud of your position. Stand by it. Our sainted father, if living, would be proud of you. Act as though he were living and you will act rightly.

Love to all. Infinite love to yourself.

ROBERT.

While Bob warred in Tennessee and Clark in Illinois, Mr. Lincoln was pursuing his steadfast way through every manner of hazard and difficulty. In this month of September he found himself, touching the future of the institution of slavery, placed as between two fires. Urged on the one side to hasten emancipation, he was conjured upon the other to avoid a policy which might alienate the support of Union slave-holders. Upon the 22nd of the month, he severed the tangled knot of contention and dissension by promulgating that proclamation which provided "that on the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, all persons held as slaves within any state or designated part of a state, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, and thenceforward, and forever free."

Upon the 24th he proclaimed the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus in a document the content of which aroused criticism from even some of those warmest in their loyalty and support.

"Whereas it has become necessary to call into service not only volunteers, but also portions of the Militia of the States by draft, in order to suppress the insurrection existing in the United States, and disloyal persons are not adequately restrained by the ordinary processes of law from hindering this measure, and from giving aid and comfort in various ways to the insurrection:

"Now, therefore be it ordered—

"First. That during the existing insurrection, and as a necessary measure for suppressing the same, all rebels and insurgents, their aiders and abettors within the United States, and all persons discouraging volunteer enlistments, resisting militia drafts, or guilty of any disloyal practice affording aid and comfort to rebels against the authority of the United States, shall be subject to martial law, and liable to trial and punishment by courts martial or military commissions.

"Second. That the writ of habeas corpus is suspended in respect to all persons arrested, or who are now, or hereafter during the rebellion shall be, imprisoned in any fort, camp, arsenal, military prison, or other place of confinement by any military authority, or by the sentence of any court martial or military commission."

Bob, far from Washington in the charred ruins which Beauregard had made of Corinth, read this proclamation and was deeply concerned. It seemed to him at this time that Mr. Lincoln had erred; that he was placing his own



influence and the fortunes of the Union in grave jeopardy. Formerly a Douglas Democrat, then what was technically known as a war Democrat, he was in 1862 rapidly becoming a regular Republican, but he was not yet so implicit a follower of Mr. Lincoln as to preclude any possibility of his criticizing certain measures propounded by the Chief Executive. Thus on the 29th of September he wrote at length to Clark touching this last proclamation:

MY DEAR BROTHER:

I was considerably surprised when I first heard of your nomination. I am not surprised now. The Republicans were obliged to run a war Democrat. I am glad you were selected. They could not have made a better choice. I glory in you much more than in myself. I had rather see honours crown your head than mine. I believe you will be elected.

People find it hard to condemn a war, while their fathers, husbands and brothers are in the field. It is hard to convince them that their loved and noble kindred are waging an unjust war. They are proud of their deeds, and when they fall, they exclaim, "They were mortal, their memory shall be immortal. They were but men. These corpses are holy."

I fear but one thing. The President with his proclamation may place a greater weight upon your shoulders than it will be possible to bear. The Habeas Corpus, what is it? Only the right to know with what you are charged. The right to an examination, so that if wrongfully held you may be discharged.

For my part I cannot conceive of any possible necessity

under any circumstances imaginable for the suppression of that right.

Better that the Union be divided, better that each state have a separate national existence, better that society resolve itself back into the chaos of barbarism, better that each person protect himself with the knife, defend himself by assassination, better that the ends of justice be reached by murder and rapine, than to allow a nation to become the sport of cliques, to be obliged to ask candour of paid prejudice, freedom of jailers; to be compelled to assist in trampling into the earth every principle of government made holy by the best blood of the world, and see the result of all that is heroic of the sacrifice and martyrdom of six thousand years scattered to the wild winds, and in their place (springing from their ruin, just as bats and snakes occupy the Coliseum) find anarchy, dictation, distrust, cruel cowardice, tyranny, a nightmare, a horrid spasm, a violent terrible death, a rotten political corpse, a stench, upon which monarchies will fatten, and endless Despotisms flourish.

Is suicide calculated to prolong life? Can a free government be best sustained and preserved by the murder of personal liberty?

Where will this usurpation stop? Are military men noted for either modesty or humanity? You may say, "The President is a good man. He does all this from the finest motives." He may be good, but he is not omnipresent. He must trust to agents, the agents to clerks, the clerks to hirelings and menials.

Must there be an American Bastille? The key of the French one was sent to Washington by Lafayette. That

key hangs at Mount Vernon now. Are we going to make a lock for it, and then fasten the lips of speech forever?

Are we going to have the prison scenes of Europe here? Solitary confinement, bread and water, darkness, dampness, vermin, twice a day the stillness broken by the steps of a jailer, night barely distinguishable from the day, the human face a novelty, nothing but dreams, reveries, disjointed thoughts moving in circles, the circles no larger than the cells. It is there that heroes become numericals. The end of a genius is announced by saying "Number 17 is dead."

The government must beware. There will be a revolution in the North. The Executive has gone too far. Safety for him lies in retreat. The President and Cabinet may themselves be petitioning for the most gracious writ of Habeas Corpus.

The retributive justice of history is wonderful. The inventor of the Guillotine made a machine that cut off his own head. The introducer of the same machine into Scotland was its first victim. They looked upon this man as the husband of his machine. After his execution they called it "his widow." Europe has furnished hundreds of such instances. America will furnish at least another. I know that the platform upon which you run would never make you the slave of oppression, the instrument of torture. That if elected you would give your whole soul to justice, magnanimity and above all to Liberty. When I commenced this letter I had no idea of writing so much. It is hard to stop when upon such a subject. Write often.

ROBERT.

As events proved, Bob's estimate of the importance of Mr. Lincoln's latest measure was inaccurate. In the North there broke forth no revolution, nor did the sometime lawyer of Sangamon County along with his Cabinet find himself forced to sue for the writ that he had proclaimed suspended. Indeed, as even Mr. Seward could perceive, things began to untangle themselves.

In Corinth, in the meantime, life moved without great incident and the Eleventh Illinois became invested with a feeling of holiday-making and cheer. The army was turning out to be a great success now that the Rebels were as good as licked, and it had been a long time since most of them had possessed so much leisure and so many opportunities for genial horseplay seasoned moderately with respectable whisky. The scouting parties seemed solely devised for their diversion and riding down guerillas was as harmless, yet as amusing, a sport as one could wish. The guerillas seldom put their pursuers to any scathe, and the Rebels who might be dangerous were miles away southward shaking in their boots. So the boys enjoyed themselves hugely and walked or rode with a swagger, and why not, for had not Old Lew told the Colonel that he had never seen better cavalry? And General Ord had said that Ingersoll's boys had done more work and were more reliable than any cavalry he knew. And General Smith, who ought to know, as he was Halleck's chief of cavalry, had said that they were the best volunteer cavalry in the service. And they were, too. As for their colonel, he was the grittiest durndest young fire-eater in the Union. Not even old Tecump himself had fought harder at

Shiloh, and it was undeniable that General Sherman had been twice wounded and had had three horses shot under him during that engagement.

The Eleventh Illinois could lick their weight in wolves.

They had it on good authority that Bragg was delaying his Corinth operations on the chance that they would be transferred to another field of duty.

They were in absolutely unbeatable condition.

And then fate tripped them.



## CHAPTER XIII

IT WAS in this wise.

Major Puterbaugh, he who with Major Sanderson had ridden in support of Prentiss on the first day of the fighting at Shiloh, was ordered on a scouting expedition in the countryside adjacent to Pocahontas, Tenn. Bob, on detached service at Corinth, put a battalion at his disposal and permission to abstract two more companies and Major Waggoner from a battalion stationed at Kossuth, a village close at hand. Joined by seventy-five ranks under Lieutenant Colonel McDermot of Cushman's Cavalry, those of the Eleventh Illinois selected to go, saw in the expedition what in the old days in Peoria would have been represented by a mild three-day bender on good Kentucky Bourbon and they rejoiced therefor. They rode away from Corinth 275 strong, in the early morning of the 25th of September, as gay a company of blades as was to be found anywhere in the service of the Union, Major Puterbaugh and Lieutenant Colonel McDermot at their head, valiant in blue and brass and clanking accoutrements.

Everything, even the weather, which was gorgeous, pointed to a spree of the very first order. Officers were jocund, men hilarious, nor did the former stand upon their dignities when some wag without even a corporal's chevrons told a hardy tale and begged that the lieutenant or the captain or the major bear him out as to its veracity. They rode thirteen miles and reached a hamlet named

Chevalla, where they ate, dozed a little, and told disrespectful stories about superior officers like Major General Henry Wager Halleck who was too damned superior to go on scouting parties. In the afternoon they rode some more, and at a half hour before sundown reached the banks of the Hatchie River where, at a bridgehead, there awaited them their advance guard. The men who composed this assured Major Puterbaugh and Lieutenant Colonel McDermot that they hadn't even had a smell of a Reb and that the country was all their own. The ranks of the Eleventh Illinois slapped their thighs and observed that probably word of their coming had reached Beauregard and he was getting back to Richmond as swiftly as might be. They noted across the river and a mile up the road a comfortably sized house and on either side of it there were fields yellow with standing corn.

The order to unsaddle and to secure this corn was blithely received and obeyed. To a veteran noncommissioned officer of Cushman's regiment who asked if pickets were to be set out or videttes dispatched to reconnoitre, Major Puterbaugh gave a negative reply. Why bother? There wasn't a Secesh in miles. Carbines were stacked by the roadway, horses picketed. Major Puterbaugh and his fellow officers crossed the bridge on horseback and made their way to the house. What better than a hot dinner, cigars, perhaps, and a little music?

A few minutes passed. It was a beautiful sunset; the evening was still; the men in the corn sang a little. On the road horses picketed nearest in the direction of Pocahontas lifted their heads and whinnied.

In the parlour of the house across the river Major Puterbaugh inclined an ear.

"Is that thunder, Mac?"

For a moment he sat as one transfixed. The road across the Hatchie was black with an army of galloping men who discharged carbines into the cornfields, drove horses before them, and swung neatly stacked arms on to saddles that rocked as the horses beneath them buck-jumped to the gunfire. Major Puterbaugh reached the road in front of the house where he had planned to dine as the thundering head of the enemy column swept over the bridge. Fumbling with a holster, he was knocked ten feet by the pounding shoulder of a big roan horse, the rider of which hacked sideways with a sabre. In the ditch the Federal major's frenzied eyes remarked his own mount still tethered to the picket fence. With a roar the gray cavalry passed in a funnel of dust, but it was obvious that it would shortly return to cover its own charge. Major Puterbaugh planned swiftly not to be there when it did.

Two minutes after, flat on his horse's neck and sprinting north by northeast, he caught up with Lieutenant Colonel McDermot and a part of that officer's detachment. The ranks of the Eleventh Illinois running, firing, and dying in the standing corn were forgotten.

Bob, sweating in Corinth the next day, wrote in gloomy retrospection to Clark:

"Just at this moment the Rebels about 1,500 strong came on the full run from the direction of Pocahontas, rode over the bridge at the top of their speed and commenced firing right and left. . . . All our companies

except G and F were in the field. They could not get to their arms or horses. The officers were on the wrong side of the road and could not join their men. Everything was confusion. . . .

"We had several men killed, some wounded. We lost most of our arms, about 100 carbines and same number of revolvers. Also 150 horses and saddles. . . .

"I feel mortified about the affair . . . so far as it affects the reputation of the regiment. . . .

"Thirty men at the bridge could have prevented the whole thing. Five pickets half a mile beyond the bridge and our forces could have retreated in good order. No use crying over spilt milk. . . . In the seven companies I do not believe fifty can be mounted and armed. I feel chagrined. The regiment has enjoyed a fine reputation. . . ."

Fortunately, however, upon the regiment's scutcheon this unchancy episode was to leave no lasting stain, for shortly after Bob had dispatched this letter, the Grand Army of the Tennessee was again in action and the Eleventh Illinois were in the thick of it.

The Confederates under Price and Van Dorn, concentrated at Ripley in Mississippi, struck north in the last days of September and by the 2d of October bivouacked within ten miles of Corinth. Halleck had been recalled to Washington to act as general in chief of all the armies of the Republic, leaving behind him in Corinth George H. Thomas of Virginia in command and Grant in a capacity still subordinate, but when on the third day of the month the battle opened, Rosecrans was actually directing the Union forces. Hamilton's division con-

stituted his right, Davies's his centre, and McKean's his left, while a brigade under Colonel Oliver, with one artillery section, engaged the Confederate advance under Lovell in the early dawn before the action became general. The Eleventh Illinois together with all units of Federal cavalry covered Oliver's operations, and when the latter, supported by General McArthur and detachments from the divisions of both Davies and McKean, fell back upon Corinth at nightfall, the cavalry had seen much rough work. On the morning of the following day, Rosecrans found his entire front enveloped, and so confident of victory was Van Dorn that, like Beauregard at Shiloh, he wired triumphant news to Richmond on the eve of the second day's conflict. He found upon attacking the city itself, however, that he had underestimated the manning of the Federal batteries, and though a little after nine o'clock his men penetrated Rosecrans's centre and a small detachment actually succeeded in reaching and capturing the Federal Headquarters, the Fifty-Sixth Infantry of Illinois countercharged with such furious violence that the shattered centre was redeemed. On the left the Texas Ranger Colonel Rogers led the Confederate attack on McKean's division, but the Eleventh Mississippi and Twenty-Seventh Ohio repulsed his men with heavy losses, and the entire Federal left wing soon afterward effected a countercharge that by noon had achieved complete victory for the Grand Army of the Tennessee. Price and Van Dorn fled southward, and the stores and ammunition deposited in Corinth remained in Union hands. Upon the Confederate retreat the Eleventh Illinois, led by their colonel, conducted a pursuit that received high commenda-



tion from Headquarters. The affair at Davis Bridge ceased thereafter to occupy their minds, and as veterans of two great battles and numerous sanguinary engagements by the way, they became definitely recognized in the army as a crack cavalry regiment always courageously and ably commanded.

Bob took his men into winter quarters shortly after, marching northwest to Jackson in Tennessee where he joined the command of Brigadier-General Jeremy C. Sullivan.\* His men were bronzed, hard-bitten, and more silent than of yore. There were among them numerous recruits who had not been of their boisterous fellowship in the good old days before Shiloh. That battle had taken a few of the tall young men from Peoria County, the tragic action on the Hatchie many more, and Corinth had exacted heavy toll. But the recruits were not long to remain inexperienced. December, 1862, proved in western Tennessee a month full of happenings.

For these the man most responsible was Brigadier General, later Lieutenant General, Nathan Bedford Forrest of the Confederate Army, sometime alderman of Memphis and upon the outbreak of the war a private in Josiah White's Tennessee Mounted Rifles. General For-

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\*

Headquarters, District of Jackson,  
Jackson, Tenn. Decr. 2, 1862.

*General Orders*

*No 9*

The following appointment on the Staff of the General Commanding is announced.  
Col. Robert G. Ingersoll, Chief of Cavalry.  
By order of Brig. Genl. Jer. C. Sullivan.

F. H. HARRIS.

Apt. Adjt. Genl.

COL. ROBERT G. INGERSOLL  
11th Ills. Cavalry  
Jackson, Tenn.

rest was as tough a soldier and as able a cavalry leader as ever held command in any army in the United States. Born in Tennessee in the days when every breath its settlers drew was the sweeter for the fact that it might well be the last, Forrest fought his way through numberless hazardous adventures and 1861 found his six feet two of seasoned bone and sinew capable of an endurance unparalleled even among the lean, hard men he led. He had only one maxim of war, one he possessed in common with every illustrious soldier in history, but it may be that he phrased differently its pronouncement.

"Git thar fustest with the mostest men" was his unique recipe for victory and he practised it frequently with almost unvarying success. It was said among the regiments that he commanded that the General was that tough you couldn't chip him with an axe, and certainly there was no bullet moulded that seemed capable of injuring him. Upon one occasion an unwise young officer, considering himself unjustly treated by Forrest, engaged him in conversation the while he drew a pistol and discharged it with its muzzle against the General's left hip. Whereupon Forrest, though desperately wounded, seized his assailant's right wrist with his own left hand, produced with his right a small penknife, and opening it with his teeth, eviscerated his assailant upon the spot. The young officer staggered away mortally wounded and Forrest, on being informed that there was but scant hope for his own recovery, armed himself with a revolver and followed after him. As he was about to put an end to his enemy's torment, he was restrained by one who said to him, "General, you need not trouble yourself to kill him, he is

already dying." The General, himself in what he believed were his death throes, halted. "All right, if you are sure of this I won't shoot him, but, damn him, he has killed me and I am determined that he shall die, too." But, as in Goldsmith's amiable and graceful conceit, "the dog it was that died." As the young man, in the agony of septic peritonitis, asked Forrest's forgiveness, that leader's biographer notes that the General "wept like a child."

Forrest it was of whom General Joseph Eggleston Johnston remarked that had he received military training previous to the war he would have been the central figure of it. Training or no, he gained General Sherman's heartiest hatred and respect not only at Shiloh but in subsequent hard-fought campaigns. Enlisting as a private in 1861, he emerged after four years of war a Lieutenant General, and his position as a cavalry leader is even to-day scarce less eminent than Sheridan's. This man it was, then, who in December, 1862, was to complicate the lives of Bob's boys of the Eleventh Illinois. Certainly no one was more fitted to do so.

On December 15th, Bob received word from Brigadier General Sullivan that Forrest was raiding in western Tennessee with Jackson as an ultimate objective. He was at this time crossing the Tennessee River at Clifton, fifty miles to the southeast. Colonel Ingersoll was ordered to repair instantly thither and to check the Confederates with what celerity he could. Consequently, in the evening of the 16th, with 200 men of his own regiment and two guns of the Fourteenth Indiana Battery, Bob rode away from Jackson and at Lexington, a hamlet a few miles north of the middle of a direct line between

Jackson and Clifton, was joined by 272 men of the Second West Tennessee. At Lexington, too, at nightfall on the 17th, he received the support of 200 men from the Fifth Ohio, so that he faced Forrest with about seven hundred men and two guns, a force of which a little less than a third were experienced soldiers.

In the meantime, Forrest came on apace. And with him came 2,500 men of whom 1,500 were veterans of every fight that had taken place in the west since Sumter was fired upon.

At dawn on the 18th, a light action having been fought with the pickets of the enemy, Bob fell back and, planting his two guns in the Lexington road, awaited the assault of Forrest's entire command. As this appeared in what seemed to the Eleventh Illinois to be inexhaustible numbers, Bob dismounted and, standing by his guns, engaged his diminishing handful in cheery talk. The Rebels yelled their famous yell, the Indiana cannon roared, the carbines crackled like a giant's morning journal, and in a sudden lull what was left of the detachment of Eleventh Illinois heard their colonel pleasantly admonishing them, "Give 'em canister! Give it to 'em in their faces. Shoot low, boys, shoot low but hit 'em."

Forrest's men swallowed the blue line on the Lexington road as a robin swallows a worm. There were a few loud minutes of sword and pistol play, but since there were four gray uniforms to every blue one, the conflict hand to hand might not long endure. Bob with a dozen men fought until they actually emerged beyond the enemy's rear, but retreat or escape was impossible. The shattered remnants of the Eleventh Cavalry of Illinois spurred

away, those of them that were able to do so, and their colonel, together with those with him, ringed round with steel and ordnance, surrendered. Major G. V. Rambaut of Forrest's command had noted the big man on foot in the faded and mud-bespattered blue uniform who continued to use his cavalry sabre like a flail, the while cheerfully bellowing to his men long after the last chance of victory or escape was gone, and when the few Federals left upon their feet shouted to their colonel to risk his life no more, this Confederate officer rode up and received his surrender. The big man in blue had suddenly thrown up his hands and shouted in a voice only a little less thunderous than the engaged artillery: "Stop firing. I'll acknowledge your damned old Confederacy."

Major Rambaut accepted the heavy sword and, sitting his blown mount somewhat wearily, mopped his brow. The Federal colonel looked about him with an expression of exquisite disgust and murmured to himself, "Hell, what a mess." In the near distance the able-bodied of his late command were passing rapidly from sight. A bearded individual with a countenance as brown as his sweat-stained saddle galloped up and Rambaut saluted. "Who's in command of those troops?" this arrival said in a sudden roar that seemed to awaken in the captured officer a mild resentment. Bob looked at him gravely. Then he smiled.

"I don't know."

"Well, now, General——" began the Major with solicitude.

General Forrest rubbed the stiff bushiness of his left



cheek with a gauntleted right palm and amended his question.

“Who was in command?”

The captured officer in blue presented an eye as bland and innocent as a child's. He lowered his voice and in a manner infinitely confidential, replied:

“If you'll keep the secret, I'll tell you. I was.”

General Forrest made a sound somewhat resembling the barking of a large dog, and Major Rambaut smiled. He knew that the General was laughing.

Bob stared with an expressionless visage at the gray horizon. There was the smell of blood in the damp air and the ground whereon he stood was soft and soaked with it.

The face of an old Peoria friend and client stared at him from the soggy earth a few paces away. In reality this face was only a profile for half of it had been shot away. For its possessor as for his one-time colonel, war was past.

## CHAPTER XIV

MAJOR RAMBAUT with a squad of men escorted Bob to Lexington and placed him in the General Store of that disturbed and echoing hamlet. He had given his parole and sat on a keg of nails and smoked a particularly strong brand of local cigar, whiling the dreary afternoon away with talk with his recent captors and what Major Rambaut termed a small game for gentlemen, "four card draw and nothing wild."

Toward evening a large company of officers and men of Forrest's command gathered in the long candle-lit room, and even the General himself appeared to occupy a keg adjacent to that one upon which Bob sat, lending an ear to the talk and whittling upon a piece of soft kindling wood with that penknife that had once slain a would-be assassin.

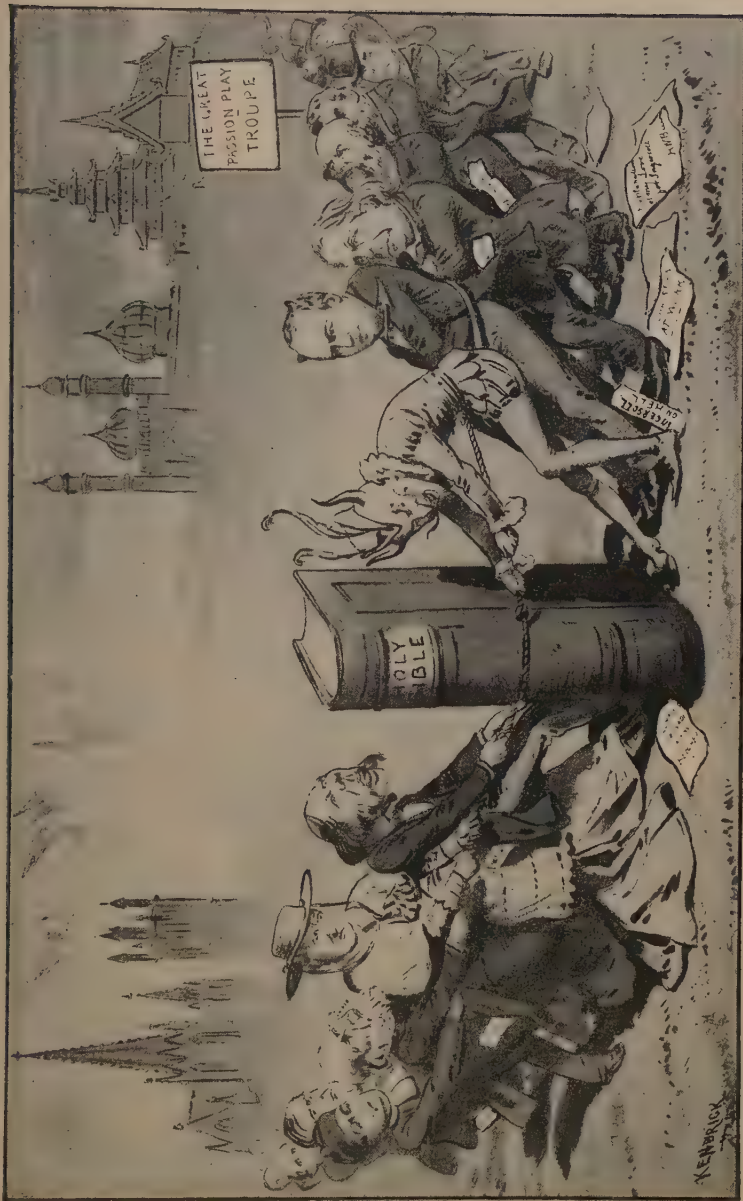
There appeared several bottles of rye whisky which passed from hand to hand with admonitions to drink hearty, and all the time Bob talked, capping anecdote with anecdote until about him was formed a four-deep ring of men, bronzed, bright-eyed, mouths flexed for laughter or guttural monosyllables of surprise. Occasionally, Forrest would utter his startling bark of mirth and murmur, while the clean lithe shavings slipped away beneath his penknife blade, "Ingersoll, you sure beat hell, yes suh, you sure beat hell," and his men would nudge one another and lend an attention sharpened anew by the indorsement of their chief.

The store became so crowded that there was in it no longer elbow room with which to tilt a bottle, or light a cigar allowed to die in the interest of the climax of some tale flowing wonderfully from the mouth of the Yankee colonel. Major Rambaut suggested moving outside. The night was clear and not too cold, and in any case the company were well warmed. The store emptied, the men carrying boxes on which to sit, and the crowd, now much increased, formed again in a ranked semicircle. Rambaut whispered to his general, who nodded, his head still bent above his interminable whittling. The Major straightened and in a brief silence made a suggestion: "Colonel, now we're all here, make a speech, will you, one of those talks you came near to beating Lincoln with, no'th in Illinois?"

The men in gray, the handful of civilians meditatively chewing the leaf, gave clamorous reinforcement to the officer's plea. Bob smiled. He threw away his cigar and, arising, stood upon his box. There fell a fine deep silence, and even Forrest checked his handiwork upon the now enigmatically shaped kindling and lifted his head. The solitary blue-uniformed figure, towering in the soft dim light above the heads of those about him, made a vague gesture like a benediction.

He talked as a friend talks to friends, though to Forrest's Tennessee Tigers the blood of his ilk was as sweet to draw as vintage wine. The men who stood about him had proved themselves in battle far more savage foemen than those slave-owning aristocrats who formed the Confederate armies in the East. For these men had never owned slaves nor thought to own them, so frugal and spar-

ing of abundance were the soils of their farms and the produce of their rocky, tilted fields. They were fighting against the right of the Yankee Government to interfere with the affairs of their particular states, in reality for nothing else. Poor men of Scotch and Irish ancestry, hard as bone and tough as whipcord, they recked nothing of wealth and labour done by black men, but at the suspicion of domination or of liberty infracted they went mad with rage by townships, by counties, and by states and, unified, formed the fighting backbone of the Confederacy. The uniform that Bob wore typified for them the tyranny iniquitously vested in Washington, but the man inside of it they had, during the last few hours, come to recognize as a human being like themselves yet transcending them, but because of qualities and virtues which they understood, desired and admired. They craved liberty and were fighting for liberty, and Bob, in a speech he was never to surpass, pictured to them a liberty which they were soiling and destroying, the personal liberty of men no less human than themselves. He indulged in no oratorical effects, no cadenced and melodious generalities, no broad and rolling landscapes of verbiage. He spoke simply but with consummate art, and the men before him found to their chagrin that tears were in their eyes and, to their astonishment, cheers awakening in their throats. Weeping, they cursed slavery, and cheering, they seemed to renounce their allegiance to their cause. Forrest, beyond the ring of the audience, beheld his cured-in-gunpowder veterans hysterical as girls. With a bellow calculated to obscure the fact that his own eyes were wet, he burst suddenly through the ranks of listeners. "Here,



From a contemporary cartoon in *Chic*.

#### CHRISTIAN OR SCEPTIC — THE TUG OF WAR

*Pulling against Colonel Ingersoll and Mr. Beecher is the Reverend T. DeWitt Talmage, a popular and somewhat sensational preacher of the period. Behind him is Cardinal Manning*





Ingersoll, stop that speech and I'll exchange you for a government mule."

The crowd sighed and in its outer fringes action was discernible. The spell was broken, and in a minute or two the bottles were being passed again and little thumbs of flame came into being and disappeared as suddenly, as cigars were lit and heavily drawn upon, in reaction to an unwonted emotion. Bob came off his box and, with Forrest's hand on his shoulder, reëntered the store.

"Hell, you were demoralizing my whole command. Just the same, if your government hadn't suspended exchanges, I'd ship ye home to-morrow. As it is——" he chewed the soggy tobacco between his teeth and spat accurately on a crack in the plank floor. "As it is, I reckon the parole camp at St. Louis is the best I kin do for ye, Colonel." He seemed reluctant to bid his prisoner good-night, and in the semi-darkness of the store, peered at him closely. "Ye've got a tongue wuth a division, Ingersoll, and the head ye carry it in's wuth a couple o' three more. Good-night to ye."

Three days later Bob, with sundry other prisoners of the fight at Lexington, was taken to St. Louis. Among them was one Frye, later a colonel in the Federal army, whom it had been planned by his captors to send to Libby Prison. Frye, older than Bob by many years, was obviously no more fitted for the hardships of such a place than a babe in arms, and Bob, in a note to Forrest, so moved that general once again that not only Frye but all those captured with him and his colonel were paroled and sent to the St. Louis camp. Forrest was jovial on their departure. "Here's hoping I see ye again, Ingersoll"—he

gave Bob's hand a mighty pressure and with his left hand inscribed a sweeping semicircle in the air—"when this fuss is over and we get what we want."

"We'll have many a talk, with good cigars and better whisky as right and left bowers, you can bet your last dollar on it, General," observed the departing colonel. His handshake was as cordial as Forrest's.

Bob in St. Louis was placed in command of the Benton Barracks. In January, he fell ill as a result of months of exposure in the field, and in April, after a short visit home in Peoria, he learnt definitely that the possibility of exchange was slight and that in all probability his days of active service were over. Writing to Clark on June 26, 1863, he observed, upon the reason for the resignation of his commission which in the last week of that month went into effect, returning him to civilian life in Illinois:

"Not that I think the rebellion ought not to be squelched. Not that I believe in the craven cowardly peace advocated by the Democracy of the North. Not that I think that Slavery ought for a moment to be preserved or protected. Not that I have come to the conclusion that two nations can exist in peace. Not that I think the North has not the ability to conquer, but because I have seen enough of death and horror. Because I have seen enough of bloodshed and mutilation. . . .

". . . I saw tears in a great many eyes when I bade my regiment good-bye. . . ."

On July 3d he was home once more, and on the following day sat with Clark upon his brother's porch and watched the flag of the Union fill the streets of Peoria in celebration of the first Independence.

In a later day, when certain ministers were disseminating any slanders touching the man who was, certainly, shattering much of their influence and decimating their congregations, it was the custom of these to impugn Bob's record as a soldier and his courage while on active service. The sermons embodying these were, as a rule, printed in local newspapers by merry-minded editors in whose points of view, as in those of most normal men, any fight was worth running a block to see and a good one worth sprinting miles in order to be present at.

Upon their publication the surviving veterans of the Eleventh Illinois would invariably explode in correspondence which, while it strove to remain dignified, conveyed an impression of intense physical desire to punch somebody. When one Baptist divine cried out that their colonel "was in but one engagement, and in that was chased into a hogyard and actually taken prisoner by a sixteen-year-old Confederate boy," men of fifty who had charged with Wallace's division at Shiloh, suggested lynching parties for that minister and lay awake at night planning violences that only half satisfied them. There descended upon the minds of these men that red madness of rage that only utter imbecility, tinged with a maleficent intent, can arouse. Fury shook them as with palsy, and the editors who received their outraged remonstrances shook likewise, but with glee. As for Bob, he said nothing save that he saw that his boys still remembered him.

And they remembered him to the end. At a regimental meeting of the surviving members of the Eleventh Illinois Cavalry Volunteers held in Peoria on July 26, 1899, five

and thirty years after their colonel's resignation from the service, the following Resolutions were adopted:

"Robert G. Ingersoll is dead. The brave soldier, the unswerving patriot, the true friend and the distinguished colonel of that old regiment of which we have the honour to be a remnant, sleeps his last sleep.

"No word of ours, though written in flame, no chaplet that our hands can weave, no testimony that our personal knowledge can bring, will add anything to his fame, which the American public will not now freely accord.

"The world honours him as the prince of orators in his generation, as its emancipator from manacles and dogmas; philosophy, for his aid in beating back the ghosts of superstition; and we, in addition to these, for our personal knowledge of him, as a man, a soldier, and a friend.

"We knew him as the general public did not. We knew him in the military camp where he reigned as uncrowned king, ruling with that bright sceptre of human benevolence which death alone could wrest from his hand.

"We had the honour to obey, as we could, his calm but resolute commands at Shiloh, at Corinth, and at Lexington, knowing as we did, that he would never command a man to go where he would not dare to lead the way.

"Hence we recognize only a small circle around his recent heaven and home, who could know more of his manliness and worth than we do. And to such we say: Look up, if you can, through natural tears; try to be as brave as he was, and try to remember—in the midst of a grief which his greatest wish for life would have been to help you to bear—that he had no fear of death nor of anything beyond.



"And we, the survivors, comrades of the Eleventh Illinois Cavalry, extend to his widow and children our condolence in this hour of their sad bereavement."

For the remainder of the Civil War, Bob proved to be, as remarked the late Honourable Clark E. Carr, worth an army to the Union. Shortly after his resignation he journeyed in company with that gentleman to Quincy in Adams County on the southwestern boundary of the State. In that town, rent and tumultuous with strife, for Confederate sympathizers and soldiers were accustomed to sweep into it from northern Missouri and subject its inhabitants to an occasional reign of terror, certain public meetings were being held in order to reinforce throughout that section of Illinois the influence of the Union.

At one of these meetings both Colonel Carr and Colonel Ingersoll were to speak. At the designated hour the former was introduced to an audience than which Colonel Carr had seen but few rougher. There were among the faces that stared resentfully up at him several, notably villainous, that he well could have wished elsewhere. The Reverend Doctor Foote, pastor of the Quincy Congregational Church and a trustee of Knox College, possessed a seat upon the platform and whispered to Bob that every scoundrelly rebel in Missouri was in town that day, at which Bob grinned faintly and nodded. Colonel Carr, speaking for only three minutes, had thrice been interrupted. In the far fringes of the crowd had been formed a sort of heckling banditti that waited, alert as terriers, to bawl their shattering irrelevancies. The speaker, finding the going heavy, increased the volume of his tone.

"Now, gentlemen——"

"We want Jeff Davis!"

Behind him Carr could hear Bob grinding his teeth.

"—as loyal supporters of the Union, patriots of Illinois whose sons, brothers, fathers have given their lives for their country in every engagement from Bull Run to——"

"Jeff Davis is the boy for our money."

The disconcerting interjection seemed for an instant in the Colonel's troubled ears to be almost unanimous. He laboured on and finished his maimed declamation in a crescendo barely discernible above the growing clamour of the crowd. He resumed his seat with relief and a lively anticipation of what would occur when Bob commenced his remarks. He had before been present when unwary individuals had sought to interrupt Illinois' premier orator.

Bob hoisted his two-hundred-odd pounds of bone and muscle out of his chair and in an ominous calm advanced to the front of the platform. His opening remark was trenchant but itself was cut in twain by the now familiar prayer for Jeff Davis. Bob paused. One arm akimbo, he raised the other and levelled a long forefinger at his audience. Thereafter he spoke casually but with the effect that every fifth face below him seemed suddenly to bloom like a poppy or a small jack-o'-lantern effectively illumined. After a few fervid minutes, he resumed the projected plan of his remarks and was not again interrupted until he approached the final climax of his speech. Then one candescent with much whisky called once again upon the name of the President of the Confederacy. His voice was feeble, even tremulous, but it brought an addi-

tional vehemence into the speaker's voice. To the astonishment of many gentlemen upon the platform, Bob was heard to pray:

"God bless the soldiers of the army of the United States, wherever they may be, whether they be on the uncertain edge of the grave, whether they be fighting and dying on the hillside, whether they be parched with thirst. God bless the soldiers of the United States——"

From the audience there came not a sound. Every eye was upon him, every breath held for an instant in suspense.

"—And God damn their enemies."

The crowd exploded in a wild yell and followed it with steady, purposeful cheering. Those who had wanted Jeff Davis went quietly and swiftly away. Quincy was restored to loyalty in a healthy bedlam, while the Reverend Doctor Foote thumped loudly with his cane upon the platform planking. "But, Doctor," genially remonstrated a neighbour, "is not that blasphemy?"

"Inspiration, gentlemen, inspiration, gentlemen," returned the orthodox but happy cleric, and thumped the louder.

But though he called upon God to damn them, it was the principles for which the Confederates fought and not they themselves that Bob made war upon. Men like Forrest and Rambaut and even the rank and file of the men in gray, found in him personally a friend and charming companion. Many years after the healing of the breach, when those who remembered its yawning were most of them dead and the remainder old, old men, Virgil Y. Cook, Lieutenant General commanding General Head-

quarters of the Trans-Mississippi Department of the United Confederate Veterans, writing to Doctor John A. Wyeth of New York, Forrest's biographer and follower, recalled Bob in the days of his active service.

"Col. Ingersoll was not only a superb soldier and a great lawyer but from a poem he wrote on Robert Burns I judge that art prevailed in him. . . .

". . . You will notice that my father knew Col. Ingersoll, who was perhaps the only Federal soldier my father ever invited to share the hospitality of his home, and that invitation was cordially extended for Col. Ingersoll was then soldiering in western Tennessee and Kentucky, where he was well and favourably known by the Southern people.

"He was one of the Federal officers who did everything in his power to prevent waste by the Federal soldiery, and through him much good was accomplished.

"He was a gentleman at all times and under all circumstances."

In a letter to Clarence T. Birkett of New York City, General Cook added further to these observations:

". . . Col. Ingersoll was a soldier whom my boyish admiration placed at the very zenith and I have never seen cause to change.

"In addition he was a courteous gentleman against whom not one word of censure was ever uttered by Southern people who knew him personally as a commanding officer."

Upon these testimonies, that of his own boys and that of the men against whom he fought, Bob's record and reputation as a soldier have rested and been preserved.

Although a civilian for the remainder of the war, its prosecution did not cease to occupy his constant and active interest. On January 9, 1864, he wrote from Peoria to Clark in Washington, commenting not without a certain mild satire on the military administration of his old chief Halleck and the activities of that body of legislators of which Clark was a member, resumed after customary New Year celebrations:

"Yesterday, although the immortal 8th of January, passed off quietly enough. The great anniversary of the never-to-be-forgotten victory of General Jackson, Pirate Lafitte, nigger troops and King Cotton over Genl. Pakenham and Judge Hall is memorable now only for having given the occasion for Douglas's great speech in favour of remitting Jackson's fine, in which speech was announced the startling idea that a man was not to blame for doing a necessary thing especially when that necessary thing was the very thing necessary to be done. And which discovery was just about as brilliant as that made by the man who said that he had noticed that large rivers were apt to run by large cities.

"I suppose Congress is by this time sober enough to commence grinding with the aid of cathartics and soda water, barring the hiccoughs.

"General Halleck yet, I suppose, enjoys the sobriquet of 'Old Brains.' The man that gave him that name must have been a satirist. My opinion is that his brains are so old that, as Piper would say, he has got no this year's sense.

"Give Mr. Halleck my compliments. Tell him that I have read *Gulliver's Travels*, the Adventures of Baron



Munchausen, and Wirt's *Life of Patrick Henry*, and that I believe every word of them all. Tell him further that I have read McClellan's, Rosecrans', and his own official reports, and that I don't believe a damned word in any of them. You may further tell him, if you have time, that I did not believe all of Pope's."

The year 1864 witnessed a notable furtherance of Clark's own career. While Bob and Black Jack, now General Logan, stumped the state for Lincoln and the nominees of the Union National Convention, lashing the Copperheads, as Northern sympathizers with the South were called, to the tune of

"The Union forever, hurrah! boys, hurrah!  
Down with the traitor, up with the stars;  
While we rally round the flag, boys, rally once again,  
Shouting the battle cry of freedom,"

county after county which at the Convention had instructed for Ebon C. Ingersoll for Congress prepared to sweep him into office at the polls. Though the Republicans proved in the end victorious, it was a fight even more bitter than that which had disrupted the state four years before. Bob, Logan, and Carr worked tirelessly. The Democrats, incensed at what they considered the shameful apostasy of the first two, since these had once been the backbone of the Democratic party in Illinois, heckled them at every opportunity, but with indifferent success, since Black Jack was still Black Jack and an even tougher customer than before and Bob's tongue, when actively disposed to annoy, was feared like plague, pestilence, and

famine. Nevertheless, in Tazewell County in April, an ancient Democratic colleague, one Al Kidder, decided, as Logan phrased it, "to spit in the lion's eye." Bob, addressing a great company of as yet skeptical rustics, paused for a brief instant and Al had his opportunity. Summoning all his forces, he howled suddenly from the front rank of the audience, "Bob, I didn't think you would change this quick."

"Change, Al?"

"Yes, sir, change."

"Well, Al, *you* haven't changed?"

Mr. Kidder, luminous with the conviction that he had the speaker on the hip, laughed loudly, but not wisely.

"No, sir, I haven't changed."

Bob's manner became suddenly brisk as though he thought it was time to get on with his work. "Well, Al, that's so. You haven't changed a bit; you are the same damn fool you always were. Now, gentlemen——"

Mr. Kidder fell shortly afterward into a decline.

Writing to his brother after one of these political revivals, Bob, Clark's campaign manager, reported all progress made:

"I have just returned from Stark, Penn township. Had a large meeting, three thousand at least were present. Everything went off in fine style, and every Union man was pleased to death by my speech.

". . . I am on the watch about your prospects for August. I think there is no danger. Knox and Peoria are certain. We must look after Bureau. Don't think I want your place. Hell, I don't want to go to Congress. I had rather have you there a thousand times. I don't

think that I can do half that you can. I know I could not. I am too impulsive to succeed as a politician with any certainty. You are where you ought to be and where I want you to stay till you get in the Senate. You can be the next Senator, I believe, if you work with that end in view."

Bureau County, upon the death while in office of its beloved Owen Lovejoy, had paid Clark the highest compliment of which it was capable, that of choosing and supporting his candidacy to fill the seat left vacant by their illustrious leader. So thoroughly did he justify its hopes, that it eventually again supported him in his campaign for election to Congress upon his own account. Its electors made their resolution known with a certain pomp and circumstance upon which Bob lightly touched in discovering the good news to his brother.

"Yesterday the County of Bureau instructed her delegates to cast their votes for E. C. Ingersoll.

"The Convention passed a very complimentary resolution setting forth that the overcoat of the afflicted Lovejoy has fallen upon your shoulders, together with a large share of his underclothing, including socks and suspenders."

With Lincoln, Andrew Johnson, and Richard J. Oglesby successful candidates for the Presidency and Vice Presidency of the United States and Governorship of Illinois, Clark, too, was victorious and became so popular a Representative that he was thereafter thrice reëlected.

The Ingersoll influence in Illinois waxed daily more powerful and far-reaching.

## CHAPTER XV

ON FEBRUARY 28, 1867, Governor Oglesby appointed Robert G. Ingersoll attorney general of the State of Illinois. Herein he was actuated primarily by the fact that Bob's reputation as a lawyer was now second to none in the West, but what also much weighed with him was the appointee's extraordinary popularity not only with his party but with men of prominence of entirely different political persuasion. The three years that had passed since the Presidential campaign of '64 had seen the war ended and Lincoln assassinated, events which in turn had cheered and crushed the nation and in particular Illinois. Bob's law practice had so strengthened and developed that he came to enjoy no leisure whatsoever, but so wide and far did he travel in his state that at least one of every three inhabitants came to look upon him as a personal friend and benefactor.

As had Mr. Lincoln twenty-odd years before, Bob "rode the circuit," in buggies prehistorically constructed or trains that at every grade wheezed rebellion and threatened with hot boxes. Metamora, in Woodford County, knew him well, as did other hamlets, dreadful to prosperous strangers, in counties far less accessible to Peorians. Metamora was the bane of all lawyers. In Metamora one led a dog's life and, on departing, prayed that it might never be necessary to return. In the solitary lodging house where one resided if engaged in legal business in the

town, tablecloths were not known and cleanliness gained no esteem. Was pie the dish of the day one might look once and think that it was raisin pie, yet if one looked twice and observed the landlady whisk the crust with her apron, the raisins would fly away and it would be apple pie. To a gentleman of Bob's habits, to one who set store by comfort and a certain bodily sense of well-being, these things were barely tolerable. As a matter of unpleasant fact, they were intolerable, but the law was the law and demanded sacrifices.

Bob drove hither and yon, ate bad food, a thing which he greatly detested, slept but little and disliked that also, and thrive amazingly. His routine in the days of his Peoria residence was notably arduous, but had he remained inactive, an impossibility for one of his temperament, things would have been far worse. As in a letter he described it to Clark, thus ran his accustomed schedule:

"Tuesday I am going to Pittsfield to argue a case before Judge Higbee. Wednesday night I am to be in Rock Island to argue a case before the Common Council—i. e., to get an ordinance for right of way for the P. & R. I. Ry. Friday I have to be in Springfield to try a case before Treat, and Saturday I shall come home."

He might have added "Sunday and Monday I devote to the preparation of cases" but this aspect of his profession, as was afterward nationally proverbial, concerned him but little, such a marvellous instrument had his mind become. Bob in his thirties was still the handsomest man in the West. His fine height and breadth, his smooth face fresh as a child's, and the singular distinction of his bearing, testified to a physical strength inherited, and an intellectual



vigour studiously cultivated, that possessed no equals in Illinois. And he was wonderfully happy. With his wife and his two little daughters, Eva and Maud, he formed a domestic unit of such genuine and vital felicity that in after years even the reporters, tough cynics who sought flaws for the bitter love of it and welcomed the currents of tragedy as they did their pay envelopes, would go away from an interview with Colonel Bob to write of the one and only thoroughly happy home they had ever seen. Then they would have a couple at the corner and bet each other the drinks that they'd never see another one, just to reinforce their sagging cynicism.

Occasionally a press of business affairs, the cumulative strain of which nobody but himself could stand, would react a little on his health, but the solidity of this made naught of the illnesses of little men. To Clark might he write, as he did, in this wise:

"Four weeks ago yesterday I stopped using tobacco. Have not smoked or chewed any since. I was weighed Saturday and weighed 227 lbs. . . . I thought maybe tobacco hurt me. Now I drink no tea, coffee or spirits of any kind and use no tobacco and I am going to continue in the good cause until I satisfy myself whether the effect upon me is good or bad"—and Clark would know that Bob, his Olympian cadet, had suffered slightly from the prosecution of a career which to pursue would be fatal to most mortals.

Having in his childhood known but few of the good things of life and never luxury, he came in his successful manhood to appreciate these and in moderation to make use of them always. "Riding the Circuit" was in some

fashion a hardship which to bear occasionally elicited small lamentations to his brother. Thus from a small and sleepy town in western Illinois he writes to Clark in 1871 that he is "in this ancient 'burgh' trying a long and tedious case before the Hon. Judge S——, who, by the way, is probably the greatest fool on the woolsack. You can imagine how I am living, the kind of board and lodging. It is *Metamora* over again. Sometimes I think Life is too short to be wasted in this way. A good dinner lost is gone forever. A poor night's rest can never be made up."

But in the end there was always success. No man before Bob or after him has ever possessed such an extraordinary influence with a jury. In Illinois he won 99 per cent. of his cases even as in later days, and when throughout the United States there lived no more eminent lawyer, his successes were proverbial. In his *Metamora* days he defended many men from the gallows, but never unless he himself believed them guiltless or their actions justified. In a tiny community torn asunder by dissension caused when one farmer slew another, the tumult was stilled when it became known that the man who had slain was to be defended by Bob Ingersoll of Peoria. Upon the day of the trial the jury, bronzed citizens equipped each one of them with that type of frozen countenance known as the poker face, seemed of the opinion that the case of the prosecution lacked a single flaw, but when Bob arose, that tide, in the drift of which was carried a man's life, began to turn. Almost leaning against the jury box, he painted to the men within it such a picture of the causes of the crime, of its justification and of the wife and children

of the prisoner waiting, torn by agony, for his return, that the twelve men who composed his audience were without a single exception reduced to tears which, in an effort to conceal, they hurriedly but ineffectually assimilated with their tongues.

Mr. Ingersoll of Peoria continued as though quite oblivious of the lamentable spectacle that he was making of these respected, leather-tough prairie men. "Will you send this man home to his wife, to his children, waiting for him, waiting at the door with hearts torn with——"

The foreman of the jury, digging into his jeans for a red cotton handkerchief the size of a small tablecloth, could bear no more.

"Yes, Bob, we will," he said, and straightway disappeared beneath the bandanna.

Mr. Ingersoll of Peoria sat down.

He did not continue his address. He didn't have to. His case was won. As the prosecuting attorney privily remarked, it was a crime in itself to be able to swaddle twelve big babies up with sentimentality to that extent, but he made the remark with no great conviction. As he said afterward, he himself had bawled like a calf.

When Governor Oglesby appointed him Attorney General, Bob was almost at the crest of his Western reputation. He served his state for two years with distinction, but in 1869, at the close of his term, he refused the renomination for a number of reasons. For one, he had been asked to run for Governor and as General John McAuley Palmer, the first choice of the party, wired to the State Convention held in Peoria on May 6, 1868, that he did not wish the nomination, Bob consented to the

bringing forward of his name. In Volume II of *Illinois, Historical and Statistical*, compiled by John Moses, there is a brief paragraph descriptive of the subsequent developments in the gubernatorial campaign.

"Peoria was the home of Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll, then attorney general, whose name had been favourably mentioned in connection with the governorship, in case General Palmer who had been brought most prominently before the public as a candidate should decline the honour, as it had been authoritatively stated he would do. A dispatch was sent to the general when the convention assembled asking him if he would accept the nomination, to which he replied, 'Do not permit me to be nominated. I cannot accept.' But the Convention would not take no for an answer, and his nomination . . . was made on the second ballot, the vote standing as follows: Palmer 263, Ingersoll 117, S. W. Moulton 82, Dubois 42; second ballot—Palmer 317, Ingersoll 118, Moulton 52, Dubois 17."

There is but little doubt that Palmer was the selection of the Republican party in Illinois, but there is even less doubt that Bob would have been nominated and swept into office by party triumph had Palmer kept his word and refused the nomination. His statement of refusal had led to Bob's candidacy, but when the delegates had convened, Palmer, for reasons that are still perhaps obscure, allowed his friends to disparage the cause of the man almost certain to be elected by arguing that he was an infidel and therefore not acceptable. Peorians to a man came to consider the Governor-elect's treatment of their favourite son not only shabby but damned shabby and a mite worse

But the fact that the Palmer men were able to use the word "infidel" in connection with Bob was a portent of the now mature development of his agnosticism. Since his return from the war he had made speeches in various sections of the state that had mobilized against him the entire clergy and a certain number of that class of orthodox laymen who pant ever for a crusade. So widely had he become known as a Rationalist that those members of the convention engaged in advocating his nomination had sent a committee to him to make sure that his beliefs were not of an order calculated to dismay the voting population of Illinois. Bob, sitting in his office, was engaged, when his anxious friends found him, with a large cigar and the second act of Henry the Fifth.

"Good-morning, boys."

"Good-morning, Bob."

"Smoke?"

"Bob, here's the whole story. We've been sent here as a committee while the whole damn convention adjourns, to find out just how much of a heretic you are. No, thanks! No time. Those cigars look the size of rolled umbrellas. If Palmer does what he says he will you'll be nominated hands down, but can you be elected if all the hard-shells in the state know you're an atheist? That's what we want to know. Now, we know you, and what you believe or don't believe don't make a damn bit of difference to us, but if you make a public claim to being a heretic that's the ace card for the Democratic nominee. You know Jack Eden as well as we do, and if he thought it would make him Governor he'd go to church once a day and all day Sunday. But he couldn't win any way at all unless



you elect to run on a to-hell-with-God ticket and, to draw it mild and brief, if you do, the convention now cussing its head off, waiting to hear from us, won't nominate you. Mind you, Bob, we don't for a split second think you'd do any such thing. We just want to make assurance doubly sure as some good Republican once put it. That's all there is to it. It's only a form, see, Bob? Now, what do you say?"

The speaker, having spoken with great rapidity, mopped his brow and, considering that he had now merited a moment's leisure, selected a cigar, chewed it, made use of the spittoon, and waited confidently for the gubernatorial candidate's reply.

Bob took up a pen and drew a sheet of paper toward him.

"Just a minute."

He wrote busily.

"Fred, you can read that to the convention, and maybe they'll cuss some more."

He pushed the paper toward the spokesman of the now somewhat mystified committee. Exhaling blue smoke through his nostrils, he reached again for his battered Shakespeare.

Fred seemed distraught.

"Man to man. Bob!"

"What?"

"What about it?"

"Why, damn it, just this. My beliefs are my own and I wouldn't sacrifice one of them to be President of the whole rolling earth. Going? Well, take another cigar. And Fred!"

Fred, the burning cylinder between his lips passing in irregular rotation from one corner of his mouth to the other, halted in his furious progress through the door and turned a grieved face over his shoulder.

“Good luck to you!”

With an indistinguishable sound of pain, Fred passed from sight.

A few minutes afterward the Republican State Convention, sweating and in shirt sleeves, hearkened attentively as the spokesman of the committee sent to sound out the Honourable Robert G. Ingersoll, read his report. Having, in shaking accents, announced that he would read aloud the Attorney General’s reply to the questions asked him, he secured with his right thumb a firm hold on his braces and commenced. The paper was not long but it was the final paragraph that particularly fixed the attention of the hearkening delegates.

“Gentlemen, I am not asking to be Governor of Illinois. . . .

“I have in my composition that which I have declared to the world as my views upon religion. My position I would not, under any circumstances, not even for my life, seem to renounce. I would rather refuse to be President of the United States than to do so. My religious belief is my own. It belongs to me, not to the State of Illinois. I would not smother one sentiment of my heart to be the emperor of the round globe.”

Fred’s voice ceased. He seemed about to cry.

The silence was absolute.

The Palmer whips who at first had appeared radiant now looked abashed. Suddenly, to Fred’s extreme sur-

prise, the convention broke into a sharp howl. It kept on howling. It was cheering. A large man with a handkerchief tied around his neck arose and flapped his arms.

"That's good enough for us," he bawled.

Shortly afterward the balloting took place with the results described, and General Palmer, not unlike a première danseuse who finds after all that she cannot bear to sacrifice the plaudits and the floral offerings, accepted the nomination. Bob heard the news with no evident signs of dismay. To his friends, whose resentment touching the General's vacillation was pronounced and violent, he dispensed merry words but no promises. For these, at the instigation of their party, were commissioned, on no account whatever, to allow Bob's services as Attorney General to be lost to the Republican machine. They beset him day in and day out with prayers and exhortations. They waylaid him upon the street and sat about the big man in a panting and expectant circle as he filled his office with the smoke of his stout Havanas and attended to his official duties. Palmer himself appreciated that his own success depended largely on the skill of the first orator in the West. Bob's influence and popularity in central Illinois were greater than any other individual's and his loss to the party would be not only crippling but possibly disastrous. The day came when a definite expression of his intentions became absolutely necessary, and he found himself beleaguered by substantially the same men who had waited upon him during the dog days of the state convention. Fred, slightly nervous, was again the spokesman.

"Bob, this is the last chance. Yes or no, which'll it be? Now that it's a showdown you won't desert the party, now, will you, Bob?"

"Why, what are you getting at, Fred? You look as if you'd swallowed a rabbit. Why the excitement? Why the pathos, the stilled voice and starting tear?"

"Will you accept the nomination for the attorney generalship?"

"Why, no, Fred."

"What!"

"Why, no. I told you boys weeks ago that by consenting to be a candidate for Governor I had automatically renounced the candidacy for Attorney General. My name, as you ought to know, is Ingersoll. When I say I won't be a candidate, I won't be."

"But the party, Bob, the Grand Old Party!"

"Well, what about the party? Why the wail? I'm a Republican. I have been since April, 1861. I expect to be a republican until there won't be any need for me to be anything. But when I say I'll do a thing or I won't do a thing, I will or I won't, which, as you know, is more than some distinguished people are in the habit of doing. And, by the way!"

Fred sat down. Despair, like the hand of age, made his face sag and his eyes dull.

"What?"

"Here's a statement, semi-official as it were, that you can give, or read, Fred, to the boys in Springfield. It might even interest the Governor elect."

He extended a sheet of paper. Fred took it. With a bleak eye he ran over its contents.

"When I say I am a candidate for a particular office, I mean it; and when I say I am not a candidate for a particular office, I mean that, too. When I became a candidate for Governor, I renounced my candidacy for Attorney General; and other candidates were invited into the field. I would despise myself forever were I now to become a candidate against any of these men whom, by my action, I have invited to become candidates."

Fred's expression lightened wonderfully. In fact, he smiled. Chuckling, he slapped his thigh, and doing so, looked once more a man in the prime of life.

"Yes, Bob. Yes, sir, the General will like this. He'll be interested in this. Good-bye, Bob, and all I can say is, it's our own damn fault."

He turned, and his men falling in behind him in trained and perfect order, the committee marched away. Above it, as it gained the hot and dusty street, it could hear, gambling in a golden barytone, the gay and tripping words,

"Oh, Andy Grew was very true,  
To Mary Ann his wife,  
Until he heard the boys in blue  
March by with drum and fife,  
March by with drum and fife, my boys,  
March by with drum and fife,  
In the glorious year of 'sixty-two  
March by with drum and fife."

Squaring shoulders and lilting a trifle in its stride, the committee passed down the street.

Thus on January 11, 1869, Bob went out of office and was succeeded by Mr. Washington Bushnell. Many



years afterward, in the *Peoria Star* of October 29, 1911, appeared the address of Eugene F. Baldwin of that city, made at the ceremony that attended the unveiling of a statue to Ingersoll in the place of his Western residence. Mr. Baldwin said in part:

“Soon after [the war] he became the Republican candidate for Governor and he would have been nominated had he not quarrelled with Horace White, the editor of the *Chicago Tribune* and denounced him for attacking his brother, Clark.” Mr. Baldwin’s remark here is perhaps not without exaggeration for, as has been observed, Palmer was without question the Republican party’s first choice, but the editor of the *Tribune* undoubtedly wielded a wide influence in Illinois and his columns were faithfully, even religiously, perused by thousands of citizens. Mr. White had, in fact, attacked Clark, and Bob, on reading what Mr. White had to say, had donned upon the spot his broad-brimmed hat and betaken himself to Chicago. Horace White, in common with Godkin, with whom he was afterward to be associated, possessed an editorial style that at its best was bitterly brilliant and at its worst was brilliantly abusive. Mr. White and Bob had spoken together and one might gather that their talk had been bitter, brilliant, and abusive in equal parts, for though Bob returned smiling to Peoria, Mr. White afterward preserved for him a respect not unmixed with dislike. It, too, possessed an edge, the Ingersoll tongue.

With his retirement from office it was obvious not only to Bob but to his friends that, as far as political preferment went, his game was played in Illinois. His statement touching his religious beliefs made to the convention

had been in some fashion his valedictory to politics. The clergy marched and countermarched, deployed and attacked, day in and day out, up and down the state, and in the end, as the prayerful Fred had predicted, the "hard-shells" took fright and joined with the black dragoons.

But his friends, and they were legion, never wavered in their allegiance. During his whole lifetime Bob never lost a friend because of his beliefs, but the rank and file of his party came to believe, not without justice, that he would, in running for political office, be an easy man to beat, so great a weapon had he voluntarily placed in the hands of his opponents. The knowledge that in the estimate of the Republican machine he had ceased to be an active force did not worry him in the least. As he had once written to Clark, he cared but little for politics, and he knew himself unsuited to participate in them though it was the opinion of his contemporaries that he might without question have been elected President had he not chosen to oppose the theology of the time. The endless little intrigues, the jealousies, the patronage, the back-tracking and the double-crossing of politics, however, amused but repelled him. Politics harnessed a man and bitted his mouth, and these things he could not stomach. His political opinions remained unchanged inasmuch as the party policies met with his approval, but after 1869 he took no part in stirring the party pot. But the party could not altogether dispense with him, and he was yet to pull them, single-handed, through more than one nationwide campaign. In private life he still remained the ace card of the national Republican organization.

Speaking on August 6, 1899, at the Ingersoll Memorial

Meeting, in Chicago, his old friend the Honourable Clark E. Carr summed up in the following words this chapter of his life, and voiced the unanimous opinion of partisan and non-partisan Illinois:

“We remember how, on account of his splendid services, and his sublime patriotism, we in Knox County and in our part of the state united in seeking to place him in the chief executive office, and we remember that by modifying certain views he held, he could have been nominated by acclamation and elected to the high office of Governor of Illinois, which would have opened the way to even higher emoluments and positions; and we remember with what tenacity and firmness he held to his convictions, and that neither public sentiment, the appeal of friends, nor the allurements of position could move him to accept as true what he could not believe.”

Thus at thirty-six Bob had chosen to sacrifice forever a brilliant political career for one which, though in the end its altruism might be applauded, was certain to breed notoriety and a legion of enemies.

## CHAPTER XVI

IN SEPTEMBER, 1869, a company of fellow Peorians waited upon Bob and requested that he speak at the unveiling ceremony of a statue to Humboldt. Bob agreed to do so with pleasure. He possessed the greatest admiration for Humboldt, a great scientist whose very just conclusion it had been that the source of man's unhappiness is his ignorance of nature. On September 14th, therefore, he addressed a very large assembly and as always, he induced, after his first few phrases, a quiescent docility in his audience that approached a sort of mesmerism. He led them from emotion to emotion, tenderly, skillfully, so that in the end, when they applauded, they applauded heresies not condoned by their pastors and took their ways home, their ears filled with a golden echo, in their eyes a beatitude of reminiscence, and in their minds certain seeds which would in time sprout and grow strong. . . .

"The very heavens were full of death; the lightning was regarded as the glittering vengeance of God, and the earth was thick with snares for the unwary feet of man. The soul was supposed to be crowded with the wild beasts of desire; the heart to be totally corrupt, prompting only to crime; virtues were regarded as deadly sins in disguise; there was a continual warfare being waged between the Deity and the devil, for the possession of every soul; the latter generally being considered victorious. The flood,

the tornado, the volcano, were all evidences of the displeasure of heaven and the sinfulness of man. The blight that withered, the frost that blackened, the earthquake that devoured, were the messengers of the Creator.

“The world was governed by Fear.”

Was, quotha? To himself Bob smiled a little pensively. The present tense might as accurately have been used. Still, with every lecture that he made he strove to instil one salient and rugged truth, and in general succeeded. With Humboldt he drove home the fact that “The universe is governed by law!”

Convinced or not, his audiences were always impressed. “Do you say so?” they said and set to thinking. Thought begat thought and it did them good to think. A year later Bob returned to his old love and delivered a lecture, now famous, upon Tom Paine. He smote shrewdly at the Old Testament so that the clergy cried altogether in a loud voice that Antichrist was now certainly come among them.

“I challenge the world to show that Thomas Paine ever wrote one line, one word in favour of tyranny—in favour of immorality; one line, one word against what he believed to be for the highest and best interest of mankind; one line, one word against justice, charity, or liberty, and yet he has been pursued as though he had been a fiend from hell. His memory has been execrated as though he had murdered some Uriah for his wife; driven some Hagar into the desert to starve with his child upon her bosom; defiled his own daughters; ripped open with the sword the sweet bodies of loving and innocent women; advised one brother to assassinate another; kept a harem with seven hundred



wives and three hundred concubines, or had persecuted Christians into strange cities."

What few free-thinkers there existed in the Middle West in 1870 murmured "habet" and were much fortified in mind and spirit, but Public Opinion gasped and was wroth. A few who remembered a certain picnic in Shawneetown years before nodded sagely. The unlicked cub had grown into a fanged and most combative lion.

In 1872 was published "The Gods," a lecture expanded from a preface and which embodied that skillful paraphrase, "an honest God is the noblest work of man." In 1873, Bob lectured upon "Individuality," in 1874 upon "Heresitics and Heresies," and when in 1875 he sailed with his wife and daughters for Europe, the Middle West, so lately a field fallow and unploughed, had undergone a wide and thorough sowing.

Bob visited England and Scotland, Ireland and France, and, as was inevitable, came back well stocked with material for additional and more vigorous work along his chosen lines. On his return, for the benefit of "The National Blues," a local military organization, he delivered in Peoria a lecture entitled "What I Saw, and What I Did Not See, in England, Ireland, and France." He informed the National Blues and a very large company besides that, among other things, in the cemetery of Père Lachaise in Paris he had not only been unable to find the grave of Auguste Comte, the philosopher, but the superintendent of that silent city had never even heard of the great Positivist. Bob had thereupon asked him if he had ever heard of the First Napoleon. Indignation!

*Fichu étranger!* Most certainly. What a question and why ask it? Bob had been bland.

"Simply that I might have the opportunity of saying that when everything connected with Napoleon, except his crimes, shall have been forgotten, Auguste Comte will be lovingly remembered as a benefactor of the human race."

And, doubtless, as one of the Blues had opined, "that flattened the frog."

Peoria, orthodox, unorthodox, or just plain indifferent, had yet to be convinced that Honest Bob wasn't the smartest man on earth. It remained unconvinced throughout his lifetime and perhaps quite justly. Not even the clergy managed to impugn his intellect. Nevertheless, what he saw and did not see in Europe is of less general importance to-day than are his other lectures, and in its time it did its audience some disservice. To Bob's dismay, instead of breeding rationalists it bred jingoes. Not many in Illinois in 1875 had taken the grand tour.

The year 1876 found him at forty-three rapidly becoming a figure of national importance. At the top of his profession, his services as a lawyer were constantly and exhaustingly in demand, and as the greatest orator that the West had known since Mr. Lincoln, he was the cherished and heralded big gun of the Republican party whenever that organization went out to war. And out to war it went in 1876. Bob was duly sent as a delegate to the National Convention held in Cincinnati in June, but in May, practising his profession, he was the lawyer for the defence in one of the most widely known trials of the decade. *The United States vs. Daniel W. Munn*, Deputy

Supervisor of Internal Revenue, indicted under Section 5440 of the Revised Statutes of the United States, proved the final and conclusive test of Bob's national reputation at the bar. The *Chicago Times* for May 23, 1876, briefly reported the occasion of his address to the jury:

"There was an unusual rush to obtain admission to the United States District Courtroom yesterday to listen to the closing arguments of counsel in the Munn whisky conspiracy trial which has attracted so much attention during the past ten days. The stalwart deputy who guards the entrance to this judicial precinct was compelled to employ his entire strength and power of persuasion to keep the eager, anxious crowd from trespassing on the convenience and dignity of the Court. About ten o'clock the Court took the bench, and Colonel Ingersoll walked into the room, took off a broad-brimmed felt hat, which gives the barrister, while he has it on, somewhat the appearance of a full-grown, well-developed Quaker in good standing in the society to which he belongs. When he has the hat removed, however, the counsellor's appearance undergoes a marked change. He then looks like the crop-haired follower of the house of Montague in the Shakespearean play. He sat down on a crazy old chair which threatened every moment to break down beneath his weight, and listened to the remarks of Judge Doolittle for the remainder of the morning, until it came his time to talk. Colonel Ingersoll never troubles himself to take notes of anything. What he cannot recollect he does not have any use for.

"Judge Doolittle occupied the morning session until the time for adjournment at one o'clock, with a review

of the case on the side of the defence. He was followed by Mr. Ingersoll in the afternoon.

"At two o'clock the courtroom was more crowded than before, and at that hour Mr. Ingersoll appeared in the forum and delivered his speech in behalf of the defendant."

Bob spoke for two hours, using no notes whatever. He opened characteristically. "If the Court please and the gentlemen of the jury: Out of an abundance of caution and, as it were, an extravagance of prudence I propose to make a few remarks to you in this case." The remarks followed, being in part that classic arraignment of alcohol which for almost fifty years has been the backbone of every temperance tract.

"I believe to a certain degree with the district attorney in this case, who has said that every man who makes whisky is demoralized. I believe, gentlemen, to a certain degree, it demoralizes those who make it, those who sell its and those who drink it. I believe from the time it issue, from the coiled and poisonous worm of the distillery, until it empties into the hell of crime, dishonour, and death, that it demoralizes everybody that touches it. I do not believe anybody can contemplate the subject without becoming prejudiced against this liquid crime. All we have to do, gentlemen, is to think of the wrecks upon either bank of the stream of death—of the suicides, of the insanity, of the poverty, of the ignorance, of the distress, of the little children tugging at the faded dresses of weeping and despairing wives, asking for bread; of the men of genius it has wrecked; the millions struggling with imaginary serpents produced by this devilish thing. And when you

think of the jails, of the almshouses, of the asylums, of the prisons, of the scaffolds upon either bank—I do not wonder that every thoughtful man is prejudiced against the damned stuff called alcohol.”

Having thus, in the eyes of the crowded courtroom, as good as ruined his client, Bob went on to remove that same prejudice from Mr. Munn and fasten it upon the prosecution. He remarked, in closing, “Now, gentlemen, I believe I have said about all I wish to say to you; the rest is for you. You must take the case, and, as I said, you do not want to go off on any prejudice against the kind or the character of the case. You do not want to go off on the idea that the air is full of rascality because some of us are to be tried next. We don’t know. Let us try this case fairly and squarely on the evidence, and the next time I meet you, gentlemen, every one of you will be glad that you found this defendant not guilty, as you cannot avoid doing.”

The jury was absent from the box long enough for Bob to retrieve his remarkable hat.

The verdict thereupon rendered was “not guilty.”

No one was in the least astonished.

On May 25th, he delivered above the grave of his father-in-law, Mr. Benjamin Weld Parker, the genial host of the mansion on the post road near Groveland, a tribute that was anodyne to those who mourned that gentleman, and June 14th found him in Cincinnati with Clark, prepared to nominate for the Presidency of the United States James G. Blaine of Maine. Blaine was the Illinois delegation’s choice though Bob himself would have preferred to place the name of Oliver Perry Morton before the convention.



Morton was his warm personal friend and admirer and Indiana's great war Governor had himself requested that Bob nominate him, but since Bob was favourable to both men he told him that he would abide by the delegation's choice. On the eve of the great day he sat in the hotel room that he shared with Clark, gazing out of the window into the hot midnight and fanning himself vigorously with a souvenir of the convention, a palm-leaf fan embellished with the portraits of Republican Presidents. Clark entered in tumult, anxiety dark upon his brow.

"Your speech, Bob!"

"What about it?"

"Have you written it?"

"Not yet."

"What?"

"No."

"But great heavens, Robin, it's to-morrow you nominate J. G."

"Don't worry, Brother, I'll do it, but if it gets any hotter I'll soon be nothing but a lot of warm water in galluses and a frock coat. I tell you, Clark, heat don't go well with two hundred and twenty-five pounds."

They went to bed.

Bob awoke from a sound sleep to find his brain curiously active. He got out of bed and, going into the sitting room, lit the gas and looked at his watch. The night was still hot, silent as the black interior of a great oven where the fires have but lately flamed. His brain was functioning with singular and incisive clearness. His speech! Year, issues, party, candidate, the massed and bellowing interior of Exposition Hall, marched and countermarched

in his brain. He wrote for an hour, lit a cigar, and peered out the window at the perspiring stars. They seemed no longer crystalline and cold, but blurred a little, languorous, almost melting. He leaned back in a chair and blew three smooth round blue coils of smoke toward the ceiling. They spun, wavered a little, and broke into little retreating waves against the plaster. He got up briskly, read over what he had written, whistled gently, and ground out the cigar. In the bedroom Clark slept serenely, covered by one sheet. In three minutes Bob, too, was sleeping, dreamlessly, hardly a line visible upon his face.

He was awakened by one who seemed to be trying to push him out of bed. Clark appeared to be in a frenzy.

"It's nine and the convention goes into session at eleven. Your speech! Your speech!"

"Sure enough."

"Robin, this is serious. You must get to work on it at once."

"Quite right, but let's have some breakfast first."

"No breakfast."

"What, violence?"

"Robin, you sha'n't leave this room until you prepare your speech."

Bob collapsed. "All right, then; how will this do?"

He burrowed into the pockets of his dressing gown. Securing the somewhat crumpled sheets of the hotel stationery, he read with gestures and fervour.

Clark sat with popping eyes.

"When did you write it?"

"Oh, last night, while you were asleep."

"What a man! Hell's bells, let's have some coffee."

The Chicago *Times* for June 16, 1876, reported the subsequent events of the day. Benjamin H. Bristow, Secretary of the Treasury in Grant's second administration and a zealous prosecutor of the "whisky ring," was nominated and, later, succeeded in securing 113 votes on the first ballot. Then Bob took the floor.

"Ingersoll moved out from the obscure corner and advanced to the central stage. As he walked forward, the thundering cheers, sustained and swelling, never ceased. As he reached the platform, they took on an increased volume of sound; and for ten minutes the surging fury of acclamation, the wild waving of fans, hats, and handkerchiefs, transformed the scene from one of deliberation to that of a bedlam of rapturous delirium. Ingersoll waited with unimpaired serenity until he should get a chance to be heard. . . . And then began an appeal, impassioned, artful, brilliant, and persuasive. . . .

"Possessed of a fine figure, a face of winning, cordial frankness, Ingersoll had half won his audience before he spoke a word. It is the attestation of every man that heard him, that so brilliant a master stroke was never uttered before a political convention. Its effect was indescribable. The coolest-headed in the hall were stirred to the wildest expression. The adversaries of Blaine, as well as his friends, listened with unswerving, absorbed attention. Curtis sat spellbound, his eyes and mouth wide open, his figure moving in unison with the tremendous periods that fell in a measured, exquisitely graduated flow from the Illinoisan's smiling lips. The matchless method and manner of the man can never be imagined from the report in type. To realize the prodigious

gious force, the inexpressible power, the irrestrainable fervour of the audience, requires actual sight.

"Words can do but meagre justice to the wizard power of this extraordinary man. He swayed and moved and impelled and restrained and worked, in all ways, with the mass before him, as if he possessed some key to the innermost mechanism that moves the human heart, and when he finished, his fine, frank face as calm as when he began, the overwrought thousands sank back in an exhaustion of unspeakable wonder and delight."

Thus the *Times*.

The speech, written at three o'clock that same torrid morning, was this:

"Massachusetts may be satisfied with the loyalty of Benjamin H. Bristow; so am I; but if any man nominated by this convention cannot carry the State of Massachusetts, I am not satisfied with the loyalty of that state. If the nominee of this convention cannot carry the grand old Commonwealth of Massachusetts by seventy-five thousand majority, I would advise them to sell out Faneuil Hall as a Democratic Headquarters. I would advise them to take from Bunker Hill the old monument of glory.

"The Republicans of the United States demand as their leader in the great contest of 1876 a man of intelligence, a man of integrity, a man of well-known and approved political opinions. They demand a statesman; they demand a reformer after as well as before the election. They demand a politician in the highest, broadest, and best sense—a man of superb moral courage. They demand a man acquainted with public affairs—with the wants of the people; with not only the requirements of the

hour, but with the demands of the future. They demand a man broad enough to comprehend the relations of this government to the other nations of the earth. They demand a man well versed in the powers, duties and prerogatives of each and every department of this government. They demand a man who will sacredly preserve the financial honour of the United States; one who knows enough to know that the national debt must be paid through the prosperity of this people; one who knows enough to know that all the financial theories in the world cannot redeem a single dollar; one who knows enough to know that all the money must be made, not by law, but by labour; one who knows enough to know that the people of the United States have the industry to make the money, and the honour to pay it over just as fast as they make it.

“The Republicans of the United States demand a man who knows that prosperity and resumption, when they come, must come together; that when they come, they will come hand in hand through the golden harvest fields; hand in hand by the whirling spindles and the turning wheels; hand in hand past the open furnace doors; hand in hand by the flaming forges; hand in hand by the chimneys filled with eager fire, greeted and grasped by the countless sons of toil.

“This money has to be dug out of the earth. You cannot make it by passing resolutions in a political convention.

“The Republicans of the United States want a man who knows that this government should protect every citizen, at home and abroad; who knows that any government that will not defend its defenders, and protect its



protectors, is a disgrace to the map of the world. They demand a man who believes in the eternal separation and divorcement of church and school. They demand a man whose political reputation is spotless as a star; but they do not demand that their candidate shall have a certificate of moral character signed by a Confederate congress. The man who has, in full, heaped, and rounded measure, all these splendid qualifications, is the present friend and gallant leader of the Republican party—James G. Blaine.

“Our country, crowned with the vast and marvellous achievements of its first century, asks for a man worthy of the past, and prophetic of her future; asks for a man who has the audacity of genius; asks for a man who is the grandest combination of heart, conscience, and brain beneath her flag—such a man is James G. Blaine.

“For the Republican host, led by this intrepid man, there can be no defeat.

“This is a grand year—a year filled with recollections of the Revolution; filled with proud and tender memories of the past; with the sacred legends of liberty—a year in which the sons of freedom will drink from the fountains of enthusiasm; a year in which the people call for a man who has preserved in Congress what our soldiers won upon the field; a year in which they call for the man who has torn from the throat of treason the tongue of slander—for the man who has snatched the mask of Democracy from the hideous face of rebellion; for the man who, like an intellectual athlete, has stood in the arena of debate and challenged all comers, and who is a total stranger to defeat.

“Like an armed warrior, like a plumed knight, James G.

Blaine marched down the halls of the American Congress and threw his shining lance full and fair against the brazen foreheads of the defamers of his country and the maligners of his honour. For the Republican party to desert this gallant leader now is as though an army should desert their general upon the field of battle.

"James G. Blaine is now and has been for years the bearer of the sacred standard of the Republican party. I call it sacred because no human being can stand beneath its folds without becoming and without remaining free.

"Gentlemen of the convention, in the name of the Great Republic, the only republic that ever existed upon this earth; in the name of all her defenders and of all her supporters; in the name of all her soldiers living; in the name of all her soldiers dead upon the field of battle, and in the name of those who perished in the skeleton clutch of famine at Andersonville and Libby, whose sufferings he so vividly remembers, Illinois—Illinois nominates for the next President of this country, that prince of parliamentarians—that leader of leaders—James G. Blaine."

Climax and the sound of many voices.

A crescendo that seemed to know no waning.

Nevertheless, the ballots disclosed that the incident so well known in the history of American politics as that of "The Mulligan Letters" had effectually spiked even this, the greatest of all possible guns, for James Gillespie Blaine. Though he received 351 votes on the seventh ballot, his opponents combined upon Mr. Rutherford B. Hayes and that gentleman, slightly to his own surprise, was nominated. But Bob lost nothing thereby. As a matter of

history, save for Garfield's nomination of John Sherman in the Convention of 1880, there has never in the United States been made a greater speech before a political convention than this, conceived and created in the steaming dawn of a day in the early summer of 1876. William Jennings Bryan was twenty years later to approach it in enthusiasm of reception, but there was no Democrat at that memorable convention who claimed for the speech of the boy orator of the Platte equality with that of Bob Ingersoll of Illinois. As the Munn trial had established and lent lustre to his reputation as a lawyer, so did this speech before the Republican Convention definitely fix his position as an orator above that of any other American, only excepting Abraham Lincoln, who has ever addressed his countrymen. When, as the cheering died away at last, he left the platform, he was, in the seasoned opinion of men who had sat in Congress for thirty years and more, the ranking orator of all those that they had heard, Clay, Webster, Everett, Calhoun, and the rest. He had shattered forever the containing shell of a renown until that day purely sectional. On June 16th, he awoke to find himself a national figure.

In a crowded antechamber he encountered the war Governor of Indiana.

"My God, Bob, you were sublime."

Morton, his face, the face of an invalid charged with an indomitable and courageous energy, a flame of enthusiasm, slapped his shoulder with a sort of dynamic affection. Bob grinned.

"Oliver, I could have made a better speech for you than I did for Blaine."

## CHAPTER XVII

ON JULY 4th, Bob delivered at Peoria the Centennial Oration, and thenceforward until November travelled from coast to coast campaigning for Mr. Hayes and the Republican party. As the *Chicago Tribune* editorially observed, "his voice was the trumpet call from Maine to California," for the thousands who heard him in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maine, Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, and Wisconsin seemed to have been effectually awakened to the menace of the Democratic resurgence and voted accordingly. In Maine a professor of Greek who heard the Bangor address was heard to remark that "if Demosthenes was as eloquent as Ingersoll, he was never properly reported," so that the *Whig and Courier* of that city saw to it that their top men covered Bob's every speech." . . . No report could do justice to such a masterly effort as that of the great Western orator, and we have not attempted to convey any adequate impression of an address which is conceded on all hands to be the most remarkable for originality, power, and eloquence ever heard in this section.

"Such a speech by such a man—if there is another—must be heard; the magnetism of the speaker must be felt; the indescribable influence must be experienced, in order to appreciate his wonderful power. . . . During portions of his address there was moisture in the eyes of every person in the audience, and from opening to

close he held the assemblage by a spell more potent than that of any man we have ever heard speak. It was one of the grandest, most cogent and thrilling appeals in behalf of the great principles of liberty, loyalty, and justice to all men, ever delivered, and we wish it might have been heard by every citizen of our beloved Republic."

The Cincinnati *Daily Times*, anticipating Bob's arrival in that city on September 17th, sent a reporter to New York to cover the address at Cooper Union on the 10th.

". . . Irresistible—magnificent. It swept along with it an assemblage of greater numbers and finer character than has gathered in our national metropolis to hear any political speaker since the early days of the war. It is pleasant to remember that we shall have an opportunity of listening to a like effort on Monday night the 18th; but it is unfortunate that we have no hall large enough to accommodate the crowd that will gather."

In New York the *Tribune* detonated with similar praises ending with the *nota bene*, ". . . the presiding officer wisely decided to submit no other speaker to the severe test of speaking on the same occasion with Mr. Ingersoll."

Eleven days later, he was in Indianapolis addressing "the veteran soldiers of the Rebellion" while Garfield on the platform behind him sat, like the audience below, with tears running into his beard and a large but inadequate handkerchief clenched in his hands. The address later became known as "A Vision of War" and to the huge company of men and women who heard it, it proved a vision that much loosened them in minds and hearts. The men wept as men will weep, pretending that by a sudden mali-



son they had all succumbed to violent colds in their heads, but the women collapsed openly and without shame. When Bob ended, Garfield was the first to shake his hand. The General had long before rejected the use of his handkerchief. It was soaking, anyway.

On October 5th, Bob spoke at Elkhart in the midst of twenty thousand people who had gathered to hear him from all over Indiana, arriving by a multitude of special trains and standing for hours about the rostrum lest mischance contrive to delay or waylay them in bed or on the way. A gentleman from Chicago reported that speech at length and among his observations were these: "Ingersoll began in his characteristic way, leading his audience to climax after climax, until men and women who had been seated stood on their feet. . . . Looking down on the great crowd, throbbing to his every utterance, Ingersoll's eyes fell on a group of twenty or thirty women in Quaker garb. There was on every one of those sweet young or old faces a look of absolute wonder. They followed Ingersoll in his soaring eloquence, unbelieving as to his power to release them from the whirlwind sweep upward and let them safely down. He seemed to catch the meaning of their faces, and, with a manner as caressing and gentle as that of a mother with a babe, he spoke, as if to them, of the glorious traditions of freedom, of the preciousness of the privilege every one enjoyed; and he came down from his lofty flight with an easy grace, and seemed to settle like a bird on wing over the group of women in drab."

Two weeks later Bob made his last political speech of

the campaign in Chicago. The *Chicago Tribune* of October 21, 1876, the morning following, fully reported the occasion in these words:

"Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll spoke last night at the Exposition Building to the largest audience ever drawn by one man in Chicago. From 6:30 o'clock the sidewalks fronting along the building were jammed. At every entrance there were hundreds, and half-an-hour later thousands were clamouring for admittance. So great was the pressure, the doors were finally closed, and the entrance at either end cautiously opened to admit the select who knew enough to apply in those directions. Occasionally a rush was made for the main door, and as the crowd came up against the huge barricade they were swept back only for another effort. Wabash Avenue, Monroe, Adams, Jackson, and Van Buren streets were jammed with ladies and gentlemen, who swept into Michigan Avenue and swelled the sea that surged around the building.

"At 7:30 the doors were flung open and the people rushed in. Seating accommodations supposed to be adequate for all demands had been provided, but in an instant they were filled, the aisles were jammed and around the sides of the building poured a steady stream of humanity, intent only on some coign of vantage, some place where they could see and where they could hear. From the fountain, beyond which the building lay in shadow to the northern end, was a swaying, surging mass of people.

"Such another attendance of ladies has never been known at a political meeting in Chicago. They came by the hundreds, and the speaker looked down from his

perch upon thousands of fair upturned faces, stamped with the most intense interest in his remarks.

"The galleries were packed. The frame of the huge elevator creaked, groaned, and swayed with the crowd roosting upon it. The trusses bore their living weight, the gallery railings bent and cracked, the roof was crowded, and the skylights teemed with heads. Here and there an adventurous youth crept out on the girders and braces. Toward the northern end of the building, on the west side, is a smaller gallery, dark, and not particularly strong looking. It was fairly packed—packed like a sardine box—with men and boys. Up in the organ loft, around the sides of the organ, everywhere that a human being could sit, stand, or hang, was preëmpted and filled.

"It was a magnificent outpouring, at least 50,000 in number, a compliment alike to the principle it represented, and the orator."

Another eyewitness, one Professor John Syphers, observed that "if the Queen of England or the Czar of Russia had been coming into the building at one end, and Ingersoll at the other, every face, I believe, would have been turned toward Ingersoll's door of entrance. The royal dignitaries from abroad would have been treated as but common spectators."

When the campaign with its clamours and alarums had come to an uproarious close, when the tumult and the shouting died, the *Chicago Journal* announced accurately and with a pleasant didacticism, that "Ingersoll was the supreme hero in the Hayes campaign."

Mr. Hayes was elected.

The ace card of the Grand Old Party had won the big trick. The big gun had spoken and achieved a bull's-eye, and now there remained nothing to do but wait four years and win again.

In the meanwhile, Bob returned with unabated vigour to his lectures. In 1877 he delivered what is perhaps his most notable lecture, "The Liberty of Man, Woman, and Child," and in connection with it proclaimed what he termed "an individual declaration of independence."

"I have made up my mind to say my say. I shall do it kindly, distinctly; but I am going to do it. I know there are thousands of men who substantially agree with me, but who are not in a condition to express their thoughts. They are poor; they are in business; and they know that should they tell their honest thought, persons will refuse to patronize them—to trade with them; they wish to get bread for their little children; they wish to take care of their wives; they wish to have homes and the comforts of life. Every such person is a certificate of the meanness of the community in which he resides. And yet I do not blame these people for not expressing their thought. I say to them: 'Keep your ideas to yourself; feed and clothe the ones you love; I will do your talking for you. The Church cannot touch, cannot crush, cannot starve, cannot stop or stay me; I will express your thoughts.'"

"The Liberty of Man, Woman and Child" and "Ghosts" were delivered in San Francisco and aroused the clergy to an attack for bitterness and misrepresentation scarce ever equalled in this country. Bob's riposte was "My Reviewers Reviewed," a lecture neatly phrased to which there was made no formal reply.

There followed "About Farming in Illinois," in which was embodied the epigram "to plough is to pray, to plant is to prophesy, and the harvest answers and fulfils," and shortly afterward Bob went to Boston to deliver in the Tremont Temple to an audience numbering, among its hundreds, William Lloyd Garrison and Governor James T. Fields, an address since known as "The Eight to Seven Address" because of that electoral commission eight of whom had declared for Hayes and seven for Tilden. New England had once upon a time connoted in Bob's mind a number of things not all of them pleasant, due to the fact that there his father's doctrines had sprung and first flourished. Years earlier, in 1864, he had written of these things to Clark, at that time visiting in Vermont:

"I am glad that you are enjoying yourself, that you are now having such a fine opportunity to see the land of your forefathers, that you have a chance of becoming bespattered with good old Puritanic mud. I have always had the idea that everything in that country looked prim, pious and prayerful, white tomb-stones, white fences, white houses, neat, parsimonious, particular, exact-egotistic, energetic, nervous, nasal, neuralgic, regular, reasoning, arguing, irrepressible, pertinacious, impertinent, smart, spry, cool, calculating, whittling, theological, fanatical, mathematical, problematical, decisive, industrious, frugal, slanderous, backbiting, faultfinding, stingy-generous, monomaniacal, literary, bookwise, practically foolish, oracular, owlish, parrotty, everything good, strangely mixed with mean and bad, a hotchpotch of Christ and Mammon, a Salmagundi of Heaven, Hell, and Plymouth Rock and a 'Ducking Stool'—of deified John



Browns and burned witches—of Polyglot Bibles and illustrated Fanny Hills—but New England with all thy faults, as the mother of Education, the cradle of Liberty, the Atlas of the Nineteenth Century, we love and honour thee still.”

When he wrote this letter Bob was thirty-one. At forty-four it is possible that in some degree he may have changed his mind, and, at any rate, the reception given his speech proved to be stout and steady cheering. Next day the Boston papers stated that his reputation as the greatest living orator was conceded to be firmly and justly established.

As the year died, his days were enlivened by a brush with the New York *Observer*, which paper had attacked at some length, and with wonderful inaccuracy, Tom Paine. Bob wrote and published a “Vindication of Thomas Paine” and invited a refutation of his statements but the *Observer* seemed not anxious to comply. Then, also, the Republican party, solicitous of his welfare, sought preferment for him and in the matter proved urgent and determined. The entire Illinois Congressional delegation requested Mr. Hayes to appoint him Ambassador to Germany and prepared for protracted lobbying with a view to electing him Senator, Attorney General, or Ambassador to France, as occasion offered or desire was expressed. In the meanwhile, Mr. Hayes was earnestly invited to devote his best attention to the Berlin appointment. Mr. Hayes did so, but Bob, to the confounding and dismay of his friends and supporters, departed to Washington and made a call on Mr. Evarts, the Secretary of State. Mr. Evarts was glad to see him but on the whole greatly

astonished when his visitor requested that his name be not considered in connection with the Berlin mission under any circumstances whatever, adding with a broad and charming smile "that there was no place in the gift of the administration" which he would accept. He then presented Mr. Evarts with an excellent cigar and departed to seek out a restaurant noted for its preparation and service of terrapin. Later he wrote to Dr. Moncure D. Conway, the friend of Emerson, Thoreau, and Walt Whitman, a brief description of the affair:

"You have probably seen by the dispatches that I have declined the mission. The religious press raised a most lugubrious howl of pious anguish. Hypocrites of the secular papers joined with the true believers in denouncing the appointment. It was laughable to see the panic occasioned by so small a matter. I was anxious to see what would be said. Upon the whole, the comments of the leading papers were very gratifying indeed—not so much because they were full of kindness to me, but for the reason that they took the ground that religion was purely a personal matter with which the public had no right to meddle, one way or the other."

It was this same Dr. Conway who made in 1899, in the *South Place Magazine* of London, the following observation:

"It is my strong conviction that but for orthodox animosity, Colonel Ingersoll would have been President of the United States. Certainly no man of his ability ever occupied that office."

Never, in whatever emotions that Bob inspired in other men, did there exist half measures.

In the autumn of 1877, he bade farewell to Peoria and the West. In the December of that year, he was, with his family, resident in Washington, never again to return, save for visits, to Illinois. The final decision and the parting wrenched his heart, and it sincerely bereaved not only Peoria but the entire Prairie State. Illinois had seen his boyhood, his early maturity, and the final development of his powers. In Illinois, he had educated himself, made his reputation, and found his wife. In Illinois, he had raised and drilled his regiment and from there he had gone to war. He had there determined upon his beliefs and his career, and there he had proclaimed the canons by which he was to govern his life. To the West he owed the initial lustre of his fame and he remained all his life long a Westerner, great physically as mentally, with a vision that embraced an infinity of space. The people of Illinois, to whom it sometimes seemed as if from them the world had taken Lincoln, held because of this the firmer to Bob Ingersoll of Peoria. Whether or not they agreed with his views upon religion, whether or not they respected his politics or his agnosticism, they were unanimous in their affection and their loyalty to the man. Honest Bob Ingersoll! The greatest living orator; a citizen of Illinois. The first lawyer of the nation; a citizen of Illinois. An intellect with few equals and no superiors; a citizen of Illinois. To-day should one stray into the Sunday parlour of some prairie farm, one would observe that in that sacrosanct interior but two works of literature are visible. Their authors were both of Illinois, both illustrious, both in their fashions of a far-reaching and wide-branching fame. One

is Ulysses Simpson Grant and the volumes are his memoirs. The other is Robert Green Ingersoll, and the volumes, numerous and weighty, are his collected works. It is possible, even probable, that the man of the house has never read Ingersoll nor yet intends to, but the books are there because he remembers, or his father remembered, the big man with the voice of gold who forty years ago was the hope and pride of his state. Peoria loved him and still loves him, and it chooses to believe what is after all thoroughly true, that all his life Bob remained an Illinoisan, drawing his strength, like Antæus, from the fertile integrity of the prairie soil.

In 1881, John Warner, the Democratic mayor of Peoria, writing to one who sought information because of the latest published attack of the clergy, voiced the sincere opinion of fellow townsmen who were antagonistic not only to his beliefs but to his political opinions.

“ . . . During his twenty-five years of life in this city as a neighbour I can truthfully say that no citizen was more esteemed, none whose views were more sought for, and none who received, whenever he addressed our people, such tokens of public approval.

“During that time Colonel Ingersoll found a warm place in the hearts of our people from his broad-gauged charity. The hand of want was never extended to him in vain. The deserving always found him a cheerful giver, and an earnest, eloquent advocate.

“He made money fast and spent liberally. In a word, he paid his debts; his credit was in a sense unlimited; his note was accepted as cash, and his check was never dishonoured that I ever heard of.

"It may be that Colonel Ingersoll has not the grace of God. It may be that without that grace a man must necessarily be a bad man, but if a man may be a good man without that grace, then I hesitate not to say that Colonel Ingersoll is a good man—at least as good a man as his critics.

"Colonel Ingersoll has never spoken in this city during the last twenty-five years without disappointing hundreds who desired to hear him on account of the want of space in the building he spoke in, even when he lectured for charity at a dollar a ticket. The religious views of the Colonel I care nothing about; his politics I dislike. But the man himself I admire, honour, and esteem; and such I believe to be the sentiments of nine tenths of the people of his old home, Peoria. Our great regret is that he has left us."

What Mr. Warner observes touching Bob's name for spontaneous and unlimited generosity was, when he left the West, a byword in the countryside. A rich man, a very rich man, his wealth, every cent of it earned, he disposed very largely of to persons to whom fortune had been hard and misery prodigal. A paragraph from the *Peoria Star* of October 29, 1911, is descriptive of his material position in the town of his residence, and of this characteristic of his life:

"The reputation that he soon achieved was far beyond anything that was likely to have come to him as a mere practitioner of the law. Even in this he had been successful. He practically owned the Peoria and Rock Island road and the P. D. & E., when an appeal was made to him to save Hayes and the Republican party. He threw



himself into the fight with all the energy of his nature, and when he accomplished his purpose he was treated with the blackest ingratitude and the railroad passed out of his hands.

"His services, however, were in such demand that money poured in upon him from all quarters. His yearly income ran up to more than \$100,000, but this neither aroused his avarice nor inspired his vanity. . . . His heart and hand were alike open to appeals for assistance, not only with his purse, but with his wise counsel and advice. Repeatedly he saved the Republican party from destruction."

Thus is Bob remembered in Illinois and thus did the path of his days swing round again toward the point whence it had gone forth. But though he was an Easterner born, it is as a Westerner that he is remembered.

In 1878, Bob was again abroad, and having in that year written a lecture upon Robert Burns, he went to Scotland and visited Alloway, his poet's birthplace. The poem now on the walls of the little house where Burns was born is Bob's and has become known to thousands to whom the name Ingersoll means no more than this. As a poem, its virtues and its shortcomings are too obvious to require comment.

#### THE BIRTHPLACE OF BURNS

Though Scotland boasts a thousand names of patriot, king  
and peer,  
The noblest, grandest of them all was loved and cradled  
here:

Here lived the gentle peasant-prince, the loving cotter-  
king,  
Compared with whom the greatest lord is but a titled  
thing.

'Tis but a cot roofed in with straw, a hovel made of clay;  
One door shuts out the snow and storm, one window greets  
the day:  
And yet I stand within this room, and hold all thrones in  
scorn,  
For here, beneath this lowly thatch, Love's sweetest bard  
was born.

Within this hallowed hut I feel like one who clasps a shrine,  
When the glad lips at last have touched the something  
deemed divine.  
And here the world through all the years, as long as day  
returns,  
The tribute of its love and tears will pay to Robert Burns.

This it was that led that rugged old confederate, General  
Virgil Cook, to observe delightfully that he "judged that  
art prevailed in" Bob.

On May 31, 1879, in a year of great happiness and  
notable prosperity, the greatest tragedy of his life wiped  
these away in a great wave of grief. Clark, for some time  
in imperfect health, fell into swift decline and as swiftly  
died. To Bob this untimely passing was a severance of  
life in himself, an amputation from his spiritual being of  
that which had largely fed and sustained it. No Damon  
loved his Pythias so well, nor Pythias his Damon, as did

these two brothers for whom the other was always the object of admiration and praise, of protection and loyalty. All their lives, since the days when in Cazenovia Ebon had routed the diminutive banditti bent upon harrying his spherical cadet, they had shared their failures and successes, their miseries and joys, their confidences and plans. While Clark sat in the House of Representatives, Bob refused to accept any office in the District lest it cause a division of opinion capable of jeopardizing his brother's influence. Was Clark attacked in the press, Bob leapt to his defence. Was he defeated, he was the first to sympathize and encourage. And Clark repaid in kind. The tenor of their correspondence was remarkable in its tenderness, a rare tenderness peculiar but not familiar to mankind.

1403 K St.  
Washington, D. C.

EVER DEAREST BROTHER:

I rec'd yours with report of your speech at Chicago. I ran it over hurriedly and saw you had made the best of all your political speeches. I cannot tell you how proud I am of you. Your name and praise are in the mouth of everyone I meet. I put the paper in my pocket and went over to the White House. I told Rogers about it, and he insisted that I should leave it with him, so he might read it to the Pres't. I left it with him, but on condition he would return it to me. Have not called since, but will to-night, and get it. Then I will read it all with pleasure. Before going over to the White House I received a telegram, addressed to you, from S——, saying, in substance:

"Can I rely on you to write biographical sketch of Hayes, for cyclopaedia? Would furnish you the few facts necessary, and you could embellish them." Hayes wished me to send you his best regards, etc., and Rogers also. Gen'l Sherman called the other evening, at the house, on you and me. I had a pleasant visit with him, and as he was leaving he said: "Give my love to your brother when you write." I am lonesome without you, and am pretty blue. When shall I hold you to my heart again?

Ever your devoted brother

CLARK.

A cessation of such a relationship as this was in no small fashion the crucial and ultimate test of Bob's confidence in his beliefs, for in a faith in immortality there might have existed an anodyne for his bereavement, but he held to his creed. On June 2d, he pronounced over the comrade of his golden years that eulogy beneath which many men have since that day slept well, though as he spoke the gates of a subconscious hope may have closed forever in his mind:

"Dear Friends: I am going to do that which the dead oft promised he would do for me.

"The loved and loving brother, husband, father, friend died where manhood's morning almost touches noon, and while the shadows still were falling toward the west.

"He had not passed on life's highway the stone that marks the highest point; but being weary for a moment, he lay down by the wayside, and using his burden for a pillow, fell into that dreamless sleep that kisses down his eyelids still. While yet in love with life and raptured with the world, he passed to silence and pathetic dust.

"Yet, after all, it may be best, just in the happiest, sunniest hour of all the voyage, while eager winds are kissing every sail, to dash against the unseen rock, and in an instant hear the billows roar above a sunken ship. For whether in mid sea or 'mong the breakers of the farther shore, a wreck at last must mark the end of each and all. And every life, no matter if its every hour is rich with love and every moment jewelled with a joy, will, at its close, become a tragedy as sad and deep and dark as can be woven of the warp and woof of mystery and death.

"This brave and tender man in every storm of life was oak and rock; but in the sunshine he was vine and flower. He was the friend of all heroic souls. He climbed the heights, and left all superstitions far below, while on his forehead fell the golden dawning of the grander day.

"He loved the beautiful, and was with colour, form, and music touched to tears. He sided with the weak, the poor, and wronged, and lovingly gave alms. With loyal heart and with the purest hands he faithfully discharged all public trusts.

"He was a worshipper of liberty, a friend of the oppressed. A thousand times I have heard him quote these words: 'For justice all place a temple, and all season, summer.' He believed that happiness is the only good, reason the only torch, justice the only worship, humanity the only religion, and love the only priest. He added to the sum of human joy, and were everyone to whom he did some loving service to bring a blossom to his grave, he would sleep to-night beneath a wilderness of flowers

"Life is a narrow vale between the cold and barren



peaks of two eternities. We strive in vain to look beyond the heights. We cry aloud, and the only answer is the echo of our wailing cry. From the voiceless lips of the unreplying dead there comes no word; but in the night of death hope sees a star and listening love can hear the rustle of a wing.

"He who sleeps here, when dying, mistaking the approach of death for the return of health, whispered with his latest breath, 'I am better now.' Let us believe, in spite of doubts and dogmas, of fears and tears, that these dear words are true of all the countless dead.

"The record of a generous life runs like a vine around the memory of our dead, and every sweet, unselfish act is like a perfumed flower.

"And now, to you, who have been chosen, from among the many men he loved, to do the last sad office for the dead, we give his sacred dust.

"Speech cannot contain our love. There was, there is, no gentler, stronger, worthier man."

So was "Finis" written beneath a long and happy chapter. The pallbearers, Senators James G. Blaine, William B. Allison, David Davis, Daniel W. Voorhees, and A. S. Paddock, and Clark's own colleagues of the lower house, James A. Garfield, Thomas Q. Boyd, and Adlai E. Stevenson, with Jere Wilson and the Honourable Ward E. Lamon, bore Clark away, but Bob remained, his eyes closed, his face expressionless.

## CHAPTER XVIII

ON NOVEMBER 14, 1879, Mark Twain, writing to his wife, remarked characteristically upon Bob's response to the toast "The volunteer soldiers of the Union army, whose valour and patriotism saved to the world a government of the people, by the people, and for the people." The occasion was the Grant banquet, held at the Palmer House in Chicago on November 13th. General Sherman was toastmaster and among the speakers were Grant, Logan, Pope, and Mark Twain himself, besides other distinguished men not unremarkable as orators. Bob rose at the thirteenth toast and, standing upon the table, worked his accustomed magic.

". . . By George, I never was so stirred since I was born. I heard four speeches which I can never forget. One by Emory Storrs, one by Gen. Vilas (oh, wasn't it wonderful), one by Gen. Logan (mighty stirring), one by somebody whose name escapes me, and one by that splendid old soul, Col. Bob Ingersoll—oh, it was just the supremest combination of English words that was ever put together since the world began. My soul, how handsome he looked as he stood on that table, in the midst of those 500 shouting men, and poured the molten silver from his lips! Lord, what an organ is human speech when it is played by a master. . . .

"Half an hour ago he ran across me in the crowded halls and put his arms about me and said, 'Mark, if I live a

hundred years, I'll always be grateful for your speech—Lord, what a supreme thing it was.' But I told him it wasn't any use to talk, he had walked off with the honours of that occasion by something of a majority. Bully boy is Ingersoll—travelled with him in the cars the other day, and you can make up your mind we had a good time."

In the memories of the men who heard it, Bob's speech that night never lost the extraordinary potency of its effect. When he lifted his glass and in a climax of characteristic modulation made an end with the words, "And now let us drink to the volunteers—to those who sleep in unknown, sunken graves, whose names are only in the hearts of those they loved and left—of those who only hear in happy dreams the footsteps of return. Let us drink to those who died where lipless famine mocked at want; to all the maimed whose scars gave modesty a tongue; to all who dared and gave to chance the care and keeping of their lives; to all the living and to all the dead—to Sherman, to Sheridan, and to Grant, the laurelled soldier of the world, and last, to Lincoln, whose loving life, like a bow of peace, spans and arches all the clouds of war," even the iron visage of old Tecump, rigid in the toast-master's chair, was melted and discomposed.

The year, waning, found him completing one of his best-known lectures, "Some Mistakes of Moses," and anticipating, not without pleasure, the presidential campaign of the following year. The Republicans, walking like Agag, delicately, lest the big gun be not at their disposal, prepared for war and looked forward to no inconsiderable struggle.

June, 1880, beheld Chicago busily factional, Grant men,

Blaine men, and Garfield's crusaders for John Sherman of Ohio, congregated in every hotel lobby and saloon. Enthusiasm in the convention itself bubbled but slowly and without heat until Garfield delivered his speech, now memorable, in nomination of Sherman. Garfield himself had not previously been in any fashion looked upon as a candidate, but when he closed it was apparent to the delegates that their man was found. Garfield's speech on this occasion is remembered as the only address made before an American political convention worthy to be classed with Bob's of 1876. Bob himself, an old friend of the Republican nominee's, commended the Senator's oration and joined in his campaign.

On October 28th, he spoke in Wall Street, New York, before an audience which, so said the *Times*, "words were entirely inadequate to describe" and which "never was equalled in point of numbers, respectability, or enthusiasm, even during the excitement caused by the outbreak of the Rebellion." On October 30th, in the Academy of Music in Brooklyn, he addressed what the New York *Herald* characterized as "the greatest political audience that . . . ever assembled in Brooklyn." Bob was introduced by a gentleman so illustrious in the annals of that great institution which he spent his days in opposing that the minnows of the clergy from coast to coast considered, for a space astounded, their Leviathan. They forgot that the Reverend Henry Ward Beecher accepted the doctrine of evolution and had done so from the start, believing and teaching that it confirmed a rational Christianity, and that of Bob's enthusiasms, Spencer, Tyndall, Darwin, and Huxley, he was, if not

a follower, a keen student. Consequently, when they read their *Herald* some of them were as folk distraught. The Reverend Mr. Beecher spoke in this wise:

"I am not accustomed to preside at meetings like this; only the exigency of the times could induce me to do it. I am not here, either, to make a speech but more especially to introduce the eminent orator of the evening. . . . I stand not as a minister, but as a man among men, pleading the cause of fellowship and equal rights. We are not here as mechanics, as artists, merchants, or professional men, but as fellow citizens. The gentleman who will speak to-night is in no conventicle or church. He is to speak to a great body of citizens, and I take the liberty of saying that I respect him as a man that for a full score and more of years has worked for the right in the great, broad field of humanity, and for the cause of human rights. I consider it an honour to extend to him, as I do now, the warm, earnest right hand of fellowship."

Mr. Beecher turned.

Bob rose.

Their hands met, and the swift union of their palms made a crisp snap that carried far into the audience.

"I now introduce to you"—still retaining Bob's hand in his right, Mr. Beecher placed his left beneath Bob's elbow and led him a little forward—"a man who—and I say it not flatteringly—is the most brilliant speaker of the English tongue of all men on this globe. But as under the brilliancy of the blaze of light we find the living coals of fire, under the lambent flow of his wit and magnificent antithesis we find the glorious flame of genius and honest thought. Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr. Ingersoll."



The *Herald*, continuing, observes: "The orator spoke in his best vein, and his audience was responsive to the wonderful magic spell of his eloquence. And when his last glowing utterance had lost its echo in the wild storm of applause that rewarded him at the close, Mr. Beecher again stepped forward, and, as if to emphasize the earnestness of his previous compliments, proposed a vote of thanks to the distinguished speaker. The vote was a roar of affirmation, whose voice was not stronger when Mr. Ingersoll, in turn, called upon the audience to give three cheers for the great preacher. They were given, and repeated three times over. Men waved their hats and umbrellas; ladies, of whom there were many hundreds present, waved their handkerchiefs; and men, strangers to each other, shook hands with the fervency of brotherhood. It was indeed a strange scene, and the principal actors in it seemed, not less than the most wildly excited man there, to appreciate its peculiar import and significance."

Whatever its peculiar import and significance were to Brooklyn, its significance and the significance of Bob's other campaign speeches were, to the Grand Old Party, another bull's-eye for the big gun.

General Garfield was elected.

He had, on October 16th, written to Bob as follows, thanking him, as it were, in advance, for his service and coöperation:

Mentor, Ohio,  
October 16th, 1880.

MY DEAR INGERSOLL:

Your brotherly letter of the 13th instant is received and read with hearty gratitude.

I never did care for the upholstery of office, nor for the power that position itself gives, and therefore the success of last Tuesday brings but little joy merely because it promises me a great place. But it does bring me the deepest joy for the reason you mention in your letter. It is a great heart throb of friendship at the moment when I was tied to a stake and even the squaws of Democracy were not afraid to thrust the lighted sticks of their slander at me.

I have followed your shining track through the campaign and have seen with what hearty brotherhood of friendship to me you have poured out your scorn upon these rascals.

Thanking you again for your letter and your work in the campaign,

I am, as ever yours,

J. A. GARFIELD.

P. S. You are called for everywhere, but I think among your various duties you ought to find time to make a speech in Delaware. If you can capture that state away from the Aminadab Slek of modern politics, it ought to be done.

On the day following the Brooklyn address, Mrs. Garfield also made known her gratitude:

Mentor, Ohio.

October 31st, 1880.

MY DEAR FRIEND:

Last evening General Garfield read to me your Wall Street speech. A friend writes "had General Garfield seen the demonstration on Wall Street—the parade of mer-

chants and business men—he would have beheld a sight never before witnessed, and one that the present generation will not be permitted to see again,” and I must say to you that your eloquent speech was grandly equal to the occasion. Though your theology may not be able to give me much comfort, your magnificent friendship does; and I thank you for every word you uttered. General Garfield joins me in admiration and gratitude and in kindest regards to Mrs. Ingersoll and your daughters.

Cordially your friend,  
LUCRETIA R. GARFIELD.

And finally, on November 10th, when the banners had all been rolled up and put away for another four years, and the Democrats had resigned themselves to their political slumberland, the President elect thanked Bob once more:

Mentor, Ohio,  
November 10th, 1880.

MY DEAR INGERSOLL:

I cannot say it as well as Mrs. Garfield has said it, but yet I must tell you that no man was ever so royally defended as I have been by you. Though I know as you do that the cause was worth more than either of us, yet so far as I am personally concerned, I am inclined to care more about the friendship which this contest has developed than for the victory we have won.

As ever yours,  
J. A. GARFIELD.

The campaign over, Bob made a plea for universal suffrage and self-government for the District of Columbia,

delivering this so-called "Suffrage Address" in Washington, and added to his anti-theological lectures "What Must We Do To Be Saved?" In 1881, came "Some Reasons Why" and "The Great Infidels," the latter awakening renewed outcry from the lesser clerics. In the midst of this it was proposed by the *North American Review* that Bob write an article on Christianity to be published in the *Review* provided that someone write a reply to it. The conditions to govern the controversy were that Bob write an article, that someone answer it, that Bob reply, that one or more individuals be permitted to answer this reply, and that Bob again respond, thus closing the debate. Bob announced that he would be willing, nay, delighted to comply with these rules, and accordingly wrote the initial article which he entitled "Is All of the Bible Inspired?" Jubilant, the *Review* set out to find the theologian or Christian thinker who would engage blades with the Great Agnostic. Beecher was, of course, the obvious man to enlist, but that venerable and distinguished divine, having glanced over the galleys of Bob's article, declined to come forward. Mr. Beecher observed that while he could not wholly approve Bob's methods, he agreed so largely with his thought that he could not qualify as a disputant. For no little time the *Review* found no fortune in its quest for a champion, but finally Judge Jeremiah S. Black, of the Philadelphia bar, agreed to enter the lists. Judge Black, meeting Bob just previous to his decision, had remarked as follows: "I have a good mind to run up one side of you and down the other on that hobby of yours, Colonel."

Bob had appeared pleasantly receptive. "Why don't

you, Judge? We could have some fun. But while you are running up one side of me and down the other, I will run down one side of you and up the other."

The Judge had snorted. "By Jupiter, I will, too." And he did, but not until he succeeded in prevailing upon the *Review* to change Bob's title to "The Christian Religion," under which caption both articles appeared in the August issue. The Judge never really recovered. As Walt Whitman seven years later observed to the devoted Traubel: "It was one of the mistakes of Jere Black's life that he got into that fight with the Colonel. I knew Black—he frequently came to see me in Washington—was a good fellow—but in that discussion he met, as he deserved, with a most scathing chastisement."

The world agreed with Walt. Though Bob dictated a fifty-eight-page reply to him, his adversary could not for fame or fortune be prevailed upon to come back and fight. Later, claiming that Mr. A. T. Rice, editor of the *Review*, had treated him badly, he published a reply in a Philadelphia paper, and one George Park Fisher, a professor of Yale University, closed the debate in the *Review*, refusing to contribute unless he might enjoy the last word.

The year 1882 brought conflict between Bob and the Rev. T. DeWitt Talmage, D. D., of Brooklyn. Doctor Talmage had preached six sermons in which he attacked Bob's lectures and sought to do them great violence, but he achieved no great success, since Mr. Beecher, the most illustrious Protestant, esteemed his colleague's opinions not greatly and was heard to laugh continuously when appeared "Six Interviews with Robert G. Ingersoll on Six Sermons by the Rev. T. DeWitt Talmage, D. D.,



To Which Is Added a Talmagian Catechism." This last seems to have given Mr. Beecher almost constant amusement for weeks. The Reverend Dr. Talmage's mode of address was not entirely sympathetic to Mr. Beecher, who deprecated pulpit dramatics and the big bow-wow of religion. The Talmagian Catechism seemed to him a cogent and admirable jest.

On May 30th, Bob made the Decoration Day Oration, the guest of honour of the Grand Army of the Republic, and laid the packed audience in the New York Academy of Music so thoroughly beneath the now-familiar spell of his address that the notables who sat upon the platform, President Arthur, Secretary Folger, Attorney General Brewster, Conkling, Grant, Hancock, Aspinwall, and other generals as well as Carl Schurz, George William Curtis, and like distinguished gentlemen, found themselves, as had the lamented Garfield at Indianapolis, hard put to it to retain a dignified composure. Four thousand dollars, the proceeds of this speech, were given to the G. A. R. to dispose of to disabled soldiers, widows, and orphans, as Bob refused remuneration on the grounds that he "couldn't talk about dead soldiers for money."

Since the beginning of the year there had been brewing what afterward became one of the most noted legal cases in the history of American criminal jurisprudence and, for the magnitude and intricacy of the evidence involved, one of the most memorable of all cases ever brought before a bar of justice. This was the Star Route Case, in which a former United States Senator, Stephen W. Dorsey of Arkansas, his brother, John W. Dorsey, a second assistant postmaster general, Thomas J. Brady, and four others

“were indicted by a grand jury, at Washington, under the Revised Statutes of the United States, for conspiring to defraud the latter, in connection with certain contracts and subcontracts for carrying the mails in a number of the Western states, on what were known as star routes!

. . . There were over ten thousand of these ‘star routes.’ The defendants were interested in 134 separate contracts and subcontracts; and it was alleged that the government had been defrauded to the extent of nearly five million dollars.”

The records of the two ensuing trials as filed in the Department of Justice fill almost ten thousand large pages, and the costs were officially estimated at \$1,200,000.

Bob was retained by the Dorseys as counsel for the defence.

Attorney General Brewster led the prosecution for the United States.

The first trial, before the Supreme Court of the District of Columbia, commencing on June 1, 1882, ended at noon on September 6th, Bob, at the request of his colleagues, making the entire closing address to the jury, which address he commenced at noon on September 5th. The jury, threatened with deprivation of food, drink, and place of sleep until they rendered a verdict, found one defendant guiltless, two guilty, and disagreed upon four, among which were Bob’s clients, the Dorseys. This verdict being set aside, the second trial commenced on the first Monday in December.

In the meanwhile, from coast to coast, public opinion was no less thoroughly aroused than it was to be forty-odd years later upon the revelation of certain alleged fraudu-

lent transactions shared in by high officials in connection with an unremarkable feature of the landscape in some Western oilfields. Bob was daily threatened by mail with a great number of painful things, and all who could came post-haste to Washington on the outside chance of hearing him in action. One man, resident in a tiny hamlet in Ohio, unable to be present in the flesh, wrote to the counsel for the defence, roundly criticizing him for aiding such notable blackguards as were his clients, but when Bob invited him to Washington to testify that he knew the Dorseys were guilty and pointed out to him that the government needed just such individuals as himself, he wrote again to the defending lawyer but in a different wise:

DEAR COLONEL:

I am a damn fool.

Commencing on December 7th, the second trial closed on June 14, 1883. Bob delivered his first address on December 21st, his last on the 13th and 14th of June, while the streets outside the court were black with those unable to find in the building itself vantage from which to hear him.

In the morning of June 15th, the weary jury brought in their verdict.

It was of absolute acquittal.

In the opinion of Bob's colleagues and indeed all contemporaries in his profession, the verdict in the Star Route Trials represented the greatest individual achievement of any American lawyer in the history of the United States. His three addresses to the juries cover five hundred pages,

but apparently, while convincing, they did not weary, for on the conclusion of the case the presiding judge, the venerable Andrew Wylie, observed that beyond all doubt Ingersoll was the greatest lawyer that he had ever met. Bob was the hero of the hour, and as he drove home after all was over, crowds lined the street and bellowed their approval.

Nevertheless, the usual splenetic minority claimed that, retained at an enormous fee by the Dorseys, he had defended men whom he had known were guilty. As a matter of sad fact, he received no fee whatever and devoted the best part of three years to work for which, owing to the financial ruin of his clients, he could collect no wages. Not that he cared, for the fact that all the lawyers for the defence had placed their notes in his hands and begged him to be their spokesman, betokened a *succès d'estime* that was worth many fortunes.

In the autumn of the year he delivered in Lincoln Hall in Washington an address on civil rights prompted by the convention of a great many citizens for the purpose of expressing their views touching the decision of the Supreme Court in which it is held that the first and second sections of the Civil Rights Act are unconstitutional. Bob spoke as a lawyer and to some extent took issue with the ruling but, sound though his law might be, the assembled company sought not so much his logic as the spell of his eloquence, so that he concluded with a characteristic flight, during which he denounced the spirit of caste and pleaded for protection and justice for every citizen abroad and at home. The assembled citizens cheered him therefor to the echo. This was what they

had come to hear. Few, perhaps, might detect beneath the spinning gleam of his phrases the merciless and formidable machinery of his mind, but the majority sought not to do so. They craved the magic of words, and listening, were satisfied. A handful of young cynics might observe that all this was a formula for patriotism sheathed in a glorious bombast, but while they admitted that it was a most efficacious formula, they, too, neglected to remark that beneath the smoke burnt a genuine and steady flame. Bob's oratory was no empty miracle. The stuff of wonder was there, though many audiences, charmed into murmurous beatitudes, cared but little to absorb it.

In 1884 he wrote and delivered two lectures—"Orthodoxy" and "Which Way?"—and in the welter and defeat of the Republican party in that year, unconvinced by the policies of the party nominee, his old friend, James G. Blaine, placed individual merit above partisan opinion. Blaine, a statesman justly memorable for great magnetism and an ability for debate of the first order, entertained for Bob's genius as an orator and his position in his party the highest respect. Five years before, in July, 1879, he had written to him in a fashion indicative of their relationship at that time:

Augusta, Maine,  
July 10th, 1879.

MY DEAR ROBERT:

You must come to Maine and dig us out. We need you—everybody is crying aloud for you—you must come.

My whole political future is at stake in the fight.



We want you to discuss the Greenback heresy and fallacy—and the Southern situation. Will you come and when? Come about August 1st.

Sincerely,

J. G. BLAINE.

N. B. Regards to Madam and the girls.

And again on the 26th:

MY DEAR ROBERT:

I want you and the "Woman without Superstition" and the two girls to come to Maine about August 20-25, directly to our house for headquarters and general abiding place—and you to make some speeches. But whether you make the speeches or not, Mrs. Blaine and I want you to come. You can wake the state as no other man can.

Don't say no. Regards to Madam and the girls.

Yours devotedly,

J. G. BLAINE.

In 1884, their friendship was unchanged but their political beliefs no longer concurred. The campaigns conducted by both parties were bitter and so drenched in personal abuse, slander, and libel that they revolted disinterested spectators and many who were avowedly partisan. But Blaine's platform was the first to crumble, undermined by Dr. Burchard's mouth-filling but fatal slogan "Rum, Romanism, and Rebellion" and the fact that the country was weary of the Republican nominee's continued waving of the bloody shirt. The war was over and people sought to forget it. To Bob, the Democrats

for once seemed to have the better man, and though he made no speeches for Cleveland, he withdrew to New Mexico, in which state the grateful elder Mr. Dorsey had put a ranch at his disposal, and remained perfectly silent. Since the election hinged on New York, which state went to its governor by 1,047 votes, Bob's noncombatance sadly damaged the hopes of the Republicans. Blaine was defeated and the Grand Old Party moved under cover for the first time since 1857. Mr. Blaine's observation that he was the Henry Clay of the Republican party, he could never be President, was for the third time proved accurate. Touching Bob's stand, the Republican leaders had little to say. His withdrawal from the campaign merely gave them additional proof that the big gun was still the big gun but that it held to its own opinions.

In the following year, Bob published "Myth and Miracle," a lecture teeming with the characteristic colour and melody of his style, and in the autumn quitted Washington and took up his residence in New York, the city of his baptism. Thus was completed the circle of his progress, the ultimate stage of his development. The East had seen his early childhood and the primary influences of an environment that bred the sinew of his beliefs. The West had seen his boyhood, young manhood, and the ripening of his abilities. In the East again he had attained the fullest development of his reputation, and finally, once more in the state of his birth, this was to become seasoned and secure.

He was fifty-two years old, but no one believed him when he said so.

Hardly a line was graven on his face. A gentleman

who, not knowing him personally, believed him an iniquitous person and hated him accordingly, remarked, on seeing his photograph, that he had the face of an inspired baby.

It was the worst thing that he could find to say.

## CHAPTER XIX

Two years after his removal to New York, Bob lost, in the death of Henry Ward Beecher, not only a devoted friend but in a sense a colleague and an ally. With Bob, Mr. Beecher had lamented the Talmagian School of religious practice, and the cartoons of the day pictured the great agnostic and the great divine opposing in close coöperation the somewhat sublimated Billy Sunday of the 'eighties whose diverting features delighted the artists of the press. Bob and Mr. Beecher differed upon method and on one fundamental premise, but in other matters they were in singular agreement. In the *Washington Post* for November 8, 1880, on the occasion of their first meeting, appeared, beneath the heads and subheads: "Beecher and Ingersoll. Two Hearts That Beat as One in Mutual Admiration. Each Thinks the Other the Greatest Man in the World—Orthodoxy and Heresy Welded Together by the 'Soft Sawder' Process," the following interviews illustrative of their relations from the first.

Bob had made several remarks to the reporters touching Mr. Beecher's indorsement on the night of the speech in Brooklyn during the Garfield campaign. He said in part:

"I regard him as the greatest man in any pulpit in the world. He treated me with a generosity that nothing can exceed. He rose gradually above the prejudices supposed to belong to his class and acted as only a man could act

without a chain upon his brain and only kindness in his heart. . . . I think that Mr. Beecher has liberalized the English-speaking people of the world. I do not think he agrees with me. He holds to many things I most passionately deny. But in common, we believe in the liberty of thought.

"My principal objections to orthodox religion are two—slavery here and hell hereafter. I do not believe that Mr. Beecher on these points can disagree with me. The real difference between us is—he says God, I say Nature. The real agreement between us is—we both say Liberty."

Mr. Beecher had observed as follows:

"I do not think there should be any misconception as to my motive for indorsing Mr. Ingersoll. I never saw him before that night, when I clasped his hand in the presence of an assemblage of citizens. Yet I regard him as one of the greatest men of the age.

". . . I am an ordained clergyman and believe in revealed religion. I am, therefore, bound to regard all persons who do not believe in revealed religion as in error. But on the broad platform of human liberty and progress I was bound to give him the right hand of fellowship. I would do it a thousand times over. I do not know Colonel Ingersoll's religious views precisely, but I have a general knowledge of them. He has the same right to free thought and free speech that I have. I am not that kind of a coward who has to kick a man before he shakes hands with him. If I did so I would have to kick the Methodists, Roman Catholics, and all other creeds. I will not pitch into any man's religion as an excuse for giving him my hand. I admire Ingersoll because he is not



afraid to speak what he honestly thinks, and I am honestly sorry that he does not think as I do. I never heard so much brilliancy and pith put into a two-hours' speech as I did on that night. I wish my whole congregation had been there to hear it."

Mr. Beecher also expressed regret that there were not more men like Colonel Ingersoll interested in the affairs of the nation.

Thus they had remained to the end.

When on the 8th of March, 1887, the great clergyman succumbed to an apoplexy and the young and energetic Mr. Edward W. Bok asked for contributions from friends and followers for a volume to his memory, Bob, with President Cleveland, Mr. Gladstone, the Duke of Argyll, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Whittier, and many others, at once responded. To-day it is Bob's appreciation that almost alone remains significant, and even in that yesterday Mr. Gladstone, on reading it, remarked with a crabbed sincerity: "Colonel Ingersoll writes with a rare and enviable brilliancy."

Mr. Gladstone was soon to have his opinion trebly reinforced.

The dynamic and bustling Mr. Rice, editor of the *North American Review* and promoter of the Ingersoll-Black controversy of 1881, now came suddenly forward with another wonderful project. Ingersoll was to champion Rationalism in his columns and against him were to tilt no less illustrious champions than the venerable squire of Hawarden, Manning the great cardinal, and a lesser warrior in the person of the Reverend Henry M. Field, D. D. All agreed to battle, and in the *Review* for August,



From a contemporary cartoon in *Chic*.

#### SOME OF THE REASONS WHY

*An inimical majority insisted that Ingersoll aspired to be President, and that political failure drove him to insobriety and thence, by a process of logic not easily explained, to agnosticism. Mark Twain, Beecher, and other notable contemporaries are also here cartooned.*



1887, the duel opened with "An Open Letter to Robert G. Ingersoll" from Doctor Field. Doctor Field engaged warmly but after a courteous parade:

DEAR SIR:

I am glad that I know you, even though some of my brethren look upon you as a monster because of your unbelief. I shall never forget the long evening I spent at your house in Washington; and in what I have to say, however it may fail to convince you, I trust you will feel that I have not shown myself unworthy of your courtesy or confidence.

The thrust that followed proved, however, of no great matter, and in the November number Bob's riposte appeared.

MY DEAR MR. FIELD:

I answer your letter because it is manly, candid and generous. It is not often that a minister of the gospel of universal benevolence speaks of an unbeliever except in terms of reproach, contempt and hatred. The meek are often malicious. . . .

This paper, far longer than his opponent's, Bob concluded with a summing-up adroitly climactic:

"For you personally, I have the highest regard and the sincerest respect, and I beg of you not to pollute the soul of childhood, not to furrow the cheeks of mothers, by

preaching a creed that should be shrieked in a madhouse. Do not make the cradle as terrible as the coffin. Preach, I pray you, the gospel of Intellectual Hospitality—the liberty of thought and speech. Take from loving hearts the awful fear. Have mercy on your fellow men. Do not drive to madness the mothers whose tears are falling on the pallid faces of those who died in unbelief. Pity the erring, wayward, suffering, weeping world. Do not proclaim as ‘tidings of great joy’ that an Infinite Spider is weaving webs to catch the souls of men.”

In the December issue Dr. Field’s only parry concerning Bob’s arguments was “for those who like that sort of thing, no doubt that is the sort of thing they do like.”

January, 1888, found yet another reply from Bob, ending with the words, “Let us banish the shrivelled hags of superstition; let us welcome the beautiful daughters of truth and joy.”

Dr. Field retired, outfenced but still urgently orthodox.

In May, the great Mr. Gladstone, like a Bayard grown old and something stiff in the joints, mounted a no younger steed and, with stately if rheumatic caracolings, rode down the lists. But if the venerable champion was physically in age, his heart was young and his intellect remained as mobile and as powerful as of yore. Almost gaily he lowered his beaver and settled himself solidly in his saddle:

“As a listener from across the broad Atlantic to the clash of arms in the combat between Colonel Ingersoll and Dr. Field on the most momentous of all subjects, I have not the personal knowledge which assisted these



doughty champions in making reciprocal acknowledgments, as broad as could be desired with reference to personal character and motive. Such acknowledgments are of high value in keeping the issue clear, if not always of all adventitious, yet of all venomous matter. Destitute of the experience on which to found them as original testimonies, still, in attempting partially to criticize the remarkable reply of Colonel Ingersoll, I can both accept in good faith what has been said by Dr. Field, and add that it seems to me consonant with the strain of the pages I have set before me. Having said this, I shall allow myself the utmost freedom of remarks, which will be addressed exclusively to the matter, not the man."

And so to a gallop and the shock of encounter. But somewhat ponderously, with a great clanking of mail and accoutrements. The paper closed with one direct cut at his delighted adversary: "And whereas the highest self-restraint is necessary in these dark but, therefore, all the more exciting inquiries, in order to maintain the ever-quivering balance of our faculties, this writer [Bob] chooses to ride an unbroken horse, and to throw the reins upon his neck."

June brought the countercharge. A paper of considerable length, it opened with a fine salute:

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE W. E. GLADSTONE, M. P.

MY DEAR SIR:

At the threshold of this reply, it gives me pleasure to say that for your intellect and character I have the greatest respect; and let me say further, that I shall

consider your arguments, assertions, and inferences entirely apart from your personality—apart from the exalted position that you occupy in the estimation of the civilized world. I gladly acknowledge the inestimable services that you have rendered, not only to England, but to mankind. Most men are chilled and narrowed by the snows of age; their thoughts are darkened by the approach of night. But you, for many years, have hastened toward the light, and your mind has been “an autumn that grew the more by reaping.”

But it closed, after discovering to Mr. Gladstone an astonishing display of attacking reason, with a wit hitherto alien to the conflict:

“And after all, it may be that ‘to ride an unbroken horse with the reins thrown upon his neck’—as you charge me with doing—gives a greater variety of sensations, a keener delight, and a better prospect of winning the race than to sit solemnly astride of a dead one in a deep reverential calm, with the bridle firmly in your hand.”

Mr. Gladstone, retiring, left only the Cardinal, but Manning proved the most redoubtable of the three. Henry Edward, Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, declared the Church to be its own witness in the *Review* for September, 1888, and fighting hardily after a fashion at the time some nineteen hundred years old, restored the confidence of the orthodox. Gladstone had somewhat disappointed, and in Camden, Walt Whitman, gurgling with satisfaction, had read his paper, murmuring, “It won’t do, Mr. Gladstone; you may try: you have the right to try—you try hard: but the Colonel carries too

many guns for you on that line." Awaiting Bob's reply, the old man had grown as excited as an urchin on the eve of circus day.

"Gladstone is no match for Ingersoll—at least not in such a controversy. Of course, he is a great man of war—has had a past—but in questions of the theological sort, in questions of Homeric scholarship, he is by no means much. Oh! there will be a funny time of it! Bob will take him up this fashion, turn him over (all sides of him), look at him sweetly, ever so sweetly, smile, then crunch him! Yes, crunch him, much as a cat would a mouse, till there's no life left to fool with."

But the Cardinal Archbishop unsheathed not theories but facts and put them to an ordered usage. In October "Rome or Reason" appeared, the first part of Bob's reply, and shorn of the courtesies of the previous discussions, it embodied a vigorous but expected arraignment of the Papacy. The second part of this paper was published in November and ended with the concluding paragraph of the entire controversy.

"The testimony of the Fathers is without the slightest value. They believed everything—they examined nothing. They received as a waste-basket receives. Whoever accepts their testimony will exclaim with the Cardinal: 'Happily, men are not saved by logic.'"

Dying away, these thunderings left Bob an international figure whether hated or applauded, and Mr. Rice, in the estimates of brother journalists, an exceedingly smart editor.

A postscript to the great debate was added when in 1889 Thomas Huxley wrote thus to Bob:

4 Marlborough Place,  
Abbey Road, N. W.,  
London.

DEAR COLONEL INGERSOLL:

Some unknown benefactor has sent me a series of numbers of the *North American Review* containing your battles with various "Bulls of Bashan" in 1888—and the very kindly and appreciative article of last April about my picador work over here.

I write mainly to thank you for it and to say that I feel the force of your admonition to Harrison and myself—to leave off quarrelling with one another and to join forces against the common enemy. The excuse of "please, sir, it was the other boy began" is somewhat ignoble; but really if you will look at Harrison's article again, I think you will see there was no help for it.

However, he is far too good a man to quarrel with for long, and I have hope we shall arrive at a treaty of peace and even coöperation before long. In the meanwhile, I am glad to say that we are, personally, excellent friends.

You are to be congratulated on your opponents. The rabbi is the only one with any stuff in him—though, by the way, I have not read Manning, and do not mean to. I have had many opportunities of taking his measure—and he is a parlous windbag—and nothing else, absolutely. Gladstone's attack on you is one of the best things he has written. I do not think there is more than fifty per cent. more verbiage than necessary, nor any sentence with more than two meanings. If he goes on improving at this rate, he will be an English classic by the time he is ninety. I see that some Washington paper (I forget the

name) has been charging me with "British insolence" to the people of the United States for my remarks about Mormonism. Of all people in the world, I should say I am the last to be fairly accused of want of respect for America or Americans, and, beyond a little mild raillery, I cannot discover where I have sinned.

But I expect it is only Christian zeal under the mask of patriotism.

I have now finished work for the present and am off to Switzerland, to get my rickety fabric tightened up for the next three or four months. I am good for no sustained work, but every now and then a spurt is possible.

Do not answer this letter, I beg, unless the spirit should move you. My life has been made a burden to me by letter writing, and now I do as little as possible. But if the spirit should move you, then Monte Generoso, Mendrisio, will be my address for the next month, and after that, Majola, Haute Engadine, up to September.

I am yours very faithfully,

T. H. HUXLEY.

During 1887 and 1888 in addition to the prosecution of this controversy and a great press of legal business Bob found time to defend at his trial one Charles B. Reynolds, accused in New Jersey of blasphemy, and to get the badly frightened little man off with the minimum fine. Held in Boonton, the proceedings were so enlivened by the great Mr. Ingersoll's discourse on human liberty that public opinion fell in behind him and, as the jury deliberated, moved him to observe to the judges: "You'd better discharge Reynolds, or I will appeal



and try the case again and convert the whole town." The judges whole-heartedly agreed that there was meat in this, but since the law might not be evaded, the fine was imposed and paid by Mr. Ingersoll, all of whose services had been rendered free of charge.

In 1888, New York's favourite statesman, the Honourable Roscoe Conkling, sometime Senator and a legal colleague of Bob's, died, and Bob was asked to deliver a last tribute. He spoke, therefore, on May 9th in Albany before 3,500 people, and when he had ended, ex-Speaker General Husted and Senator Coggeshall, respectively, moved and seconded that Bob be tendered by the legislature a vote of thanks for an oration which "in purity of style, in poetic expression, in cogency of statement, and in brilliancy of rhetoric . . . stands unrivalled among the eulogies of either ancient or modern days. As effective as Demosthenes, as polished as Cicero, as ornate as Burke, as scholarly as Gladstone, the orator of the evening, in surpassing others, has eclipsed himself."

The years had brought to Bob a facility in eloquence never surpassed in American history. The night of May 8th had found him at the Nineteenth Century Club, casually disposing of the Honourable Frederic R. Coudert and ex-Governor S. L. Woodford in a discussion of "The Limitations of Toleration." In Camden, carefully examining his *Herald*, Walt came upon the report of this encounter and took much joy in it. Traubel, Boswelling with care, was called upon to observe the journal. "I am done with it: you will like to see it. Ingersoll uses them both up as a matter of course—does it easily, nonchalantly—sits back in his chair—I should imagine, this way—

shuts his eyes: as easily as this, sweeps them right and left with the movement of his arm."

The Conkling Tribute was prepared in something less than five hours.

The year 1889 yielded the infinite satisfaction of allowing an opportunity to contribute to the raising of a monument to Giordano Bruno.

Law Office, Robert G. Ingersoll,  
40 Wall Street,  
New York, Feb. 8, 1889.

T. B. WAKEMAN, ESQ.

Treasurer of the Bruno Monument Committee:

MY DEAR SIR:

It gives me pleasure to enclose my check for One hundred dollars (\$100).

I shall never be quite satisfied until there is a monument to Bruno higher than the dome of St. Peter's.

Yours very truly,  
R. G. INGERSOLL.

Though continually occupied with one of the largest individual practices in the United States, Bob continued to find the time for the continued dissemination of his beliefs and the discussion of his enthusiasms. Thus he lectured on Shakespeare one night and the next day devoted his attention to the last notable case of his career, the Davis Will case, brought to trial in 1891 in Butte, Mont., to the joy of Westerners who at last had the opportunity to hear him speak. Days before the opening of the trial the roads, like those on Epsom Downs on

Derby Day in England, were thronged with long, brown men travelling in to hear the "top-talker of the whole damn outfit." The Davis millions and their disposition were of minor importance compared to the big man in the sack suit and white waistcoat who, with the face of a rollicking cherub, hypnotized the jury and held the courtroom transfixed. Senator Sanders, counsel for the opposition, warned the jury in vain to beware of Ingersoll, whose oratory, he said, feverishly recalling the textbooks of his youth, transcended that of Greece in the time of Alexander. Warned, the jury sat pop-eyed and gasping, and the tall gentry of rural Montana chewed tobacco in trancelike silence all day and got successfully drunk every night so as to be fresh for Colonel Bob in the morning. The state journals waxed ecstatic and lamented that there were not more superlatives in the language. All his life long, Bob remained the darling of the press, and from coast to coast his comings and his goings were invariably chronicled with prodigal detail and extravagant praises indiscriminately interwoven with the description of fact and occurrence, and Montana proved no exception. Thus observed, editorially, the *Anaconda Standard*, of Butte, on September 5, 1891:

"The matchless eloquence of Ingersoll! Where will one look for the like of it? What other man living has the faculty of blending wit and humour, pathos and fact and logic with such exquisite grace, or with such impressive force? Senator Sanders this morning begged the jury to beware of the oratory of Ingersoll, as it transcended that of Greece. Sanders was not far amiss. In fierce and terrible invective Ingersoll is not to be compared to

Demosthenes. But in no other respect is Demosthenes his superior. To a modern audience, at least, Demosthenes on the Crown would seem a pretty poor sort of affair by the side of Ingersoll on the Davis will. It was a great effort, and its chief greatness lay in its extreme simplicity.

"Ingersoll stepped up to the jurors as near as he could get and kept slowly walking up and down before them. At times he would single out a single jurymen, stop in front of him, gaze steadily into his face and direct his remarks for a minute or two to that one man alone. Again he would turn and address himself to Senator Sanders, Judge Dixon, or somebody else of those interested in establishing the will as genuine. At times the gravity of the jury and the audience was so completely upset that Judge McHatton had to rap for order, but presently the Colonel would change his mood and the audience would be hushed into deepest silence. If the jury could have retired immediately upon the conclusion of Ingersoll's argument, there is little doubt as to what the verdict would have been.

"If Ingersoll himself is not absolutely convinced that the will is a forgery, he certainly had the art of making people believe that he was so convinced. He said he hoped he might never win a case that he ought not to win as a matter of right and justice. The idea which he sought to convey and which he did convey was that he believed he was right, no matter whether he could make others believe as he did or not. In that lies Ingersoll's power.

"Whether by accident or design the will got torn this morning. A piece in the form of a triangle was torn from

one end. Ingersoll made quite a point this afternoon by passing the pieces around among the jury, and asking each man of them to note that the ink at the torn edges had not sunk into the paper. In doing this he adopted a conversational tone and kept pressing the point until the juror he was working upon nodded his head in approval.

"Both Judge Dixon and Senator Sanders interrupted Ingersoll early in the speech to take exception to certain of his remarks, but the Colonel's dangerous repartee and delicate art in twisting anything they might say to his own advantage soon put a stop to the interruptions, and the speaker had full sway during the rest of the time at his disposal. (Ingersoll: Suppose witnesses had sworn that Judge Woolworth wrote this will. How many Salt Creekers do you think it would take to convince you that you were around spelling sheet "sheat"? Woolworth: I have done worse than that a great many times. Ingersoll: You have acted worse than that, but you have never spelled worse than that.) The crowd—it was as big as circumstances would permit, every available inch of space in the room and in the courthouse corridors being occupied—enjoyed Ingersoll's speech immensely, and only respect for the proprieties of the place prevented frequent bursts of applause as an accompaniment to the frequent bursts of eloquence."

Bob further endeared himself to the citizens of Montana when, in order to raise money for the family of the Honourable Aaron C. Witter, but recently elected Speaker of the House, who had died leaving his family in sorely straitened circumstances, he gave in Helena his "Shakespeare" lecture, buying many tickets himself and raising



\$1,165. In fact, Montana fell in love with him and at the conclusion of the lecture found a tongue in the citizen who sententiously observed, to Bob's infinite amusement, "A greater than Shakespeare is his panegyrist."

He returned to the East to deliver soon after, at the funeral ceremonies of his old friend Walt, the eulogy that the old poet had while living begged that he would give.

Travelling from Camden back to New York, he meditated upon those men whom he had loved and for whose passing he had pronounced a valedictory.

Parker, his father-in-law, Clark, Conkling, and many more who had in far less measure shared the loyalty and devotion of his days. And now Walt. Steadily, the ribbon of existence became unwound, but upon it, now, were figured far fewer faces, sought for and familiarly cherished. The smoke from his cigar seemed to resolve itself smoothly for an instant into a wavering azure question mark that as swiftly faded in the breath of an errant breeze. The breath of life. . . . Where had they gone, these men that he had loved, and whence had they come . . . ?

He had not wished to look upon the dead face of the Good Gray Poet, and Conway, behind him, had pushed by to rhapsodize.

But what beauty lurked there in the contemplation of dust, save a fugitive desire to behold in decay, resurgence, and in destruction the active impulse to create.

Bob sighed.

He himself was in his nine-and-fiftieth year.

## CHAPTER XX

BOB was beloved of many classes of men, from farmers to presidents, but was by none more cherished than by those whose lives were devoted to the arts, men of letters and musicians, who found in him every perception and sympathetic reaction. Walt's affection and admiration for him had been not singular, though it may be that in an old age grown delightfully garrulous he talked more of his friend the Colonel than might others. His observations to Traubel, his biographer, had been interminable but all glowing, spontaneous as the spoken impulses of a child:

"Damn if I don't think the Colonel is always magnificent. . . . There was always something ample, sufficient, about Bob's ways and means: he always seemed big enough to go as high and as deep and as far around as anybody. He is the same man to-day [1888], only a little more so if anything: inevitably, tremendously, yet almost lethargically forceful, like a law of nature. . . .

Or: "Ingersoll stands for perfect poise, nonchalance, equability: he is non-conventional: runs on like a stream: is sweet, fluid—as they say in the Bible, like a precious ointment."

Walt had followed with the enthusiasm of a small boy all controversies in which Bob engaged and wallowed blissfully in his chair as he read reports of these in the papers:

"The Colonel has a big air about him that discomposes

his enemies: They are not prepared for his generosity, his wit, his hospitality: he is a dangerous man to meet if you don't want to like him: he overcomes venom—he baffles the quibblers.”

Bob's appearance had delighted Walt as it delighted everyone who ever saw him, even the cartoonists, who in their work would never distort his face, so that its babylike freshness and cherubic expression were wont to appear in the press side by side with cruel caricaturings of Blaine or Talmage and even Beecher. Walt had taken pleasure in considering for long periods at a time photographs of Bob which had been sent to him and discussing them in disjointed monologues: “That is a grand brow: and the face—look at the face—see the mouth; it is the head, the face, the poise, of a noble human being. America don't know to-day how proud she ought to be of Ingersoll.” Bob's oratory had filled him with loud joy and especially his eulogies had moved the old man greatly, perhaps because there had been present always in his mind the thought that soon it would be he who slept beneath the cadenced periods of his friend:

“Ingersoll certainly has what I would call a genius for such a function: all his funeral addresses are marvels of beauty: short, musical, rich in cadence, pithy, never too much, never too little; and the best part of Ingersoll is, I don't think anybody ever loses interest in him who hears him speak. . . . He is one of the very few—the very select few, who are alive and keep others alive with them.”

On the poet's seventy-first birthday Bob had gone to Philadelphia to be present at the old man's dinner and had fascinated him for fifty-five minutes with an extempo-

aneous discussion which Walt had considered the greatest oratory that he had ever heard. Five months later, he lectured in Horticultural Hall in the same city and raised nearly \$900 for the Whitman benefit fund, and afterward had sat for a little time with the poet who, in a sad clarity of mind, had known that the long parting was not much longer to be deferred.

Bob's eulogy in Harleigh Cemetery would have awakened the old enthusiasm upon Walt's once ready tongue. He had never been more eloquent.

But Walt was only one among many who swore by Bob the man, whatever their convictions touching his agnosticism. John Burroughs was a fast admirer whose correspondence brought with it a pastoral coziness grateful to Bob, mewed up in the city in the coil of affairs:

West Park, N. Y.,  
June 23rd, 1892.

DEAR COL. INGERSOLL:

I hope I may be able to come to you next week as you suggest. I am not sure yet. My vineyard has run riot in my absence, and my currant crop is coming on apace. With good weather and good luck I may get things in shape so that I can run off again a couple of days. I too have some stubborn points to argue before my grapevines, and an adjournment is always a losing game with me.

I will telegraph Wednesday if I can come, but do not let it make any difference with you. An indefinite man must take his chances.

With love,  
JOHN BURROUGHS.

And later in the year:

West Park, New York,  
September 22nd, 1892.

DEAR COLONEL INGERSOLL:

Traubel brought me greetings from you, and instantly I had a happy thought, namely, to send you a basket of my grapes. You may know that I am a grape-grower; we have sent to market 32 tons of them and have a few tons left—I put a variety in your basket—Diamond, Green Mountain (very sweet) Gaertner Barey, Mills, Vergances, Rebecca, Empire State and Creveling. My favourite is the Mills (black with the Muscat flavour) a cross between the Hamburg and the Creveling. It gives me great pleasure to remember you in this way. To such as you I would send perpetual gifts of fruit and flowers.

Truly your friend,  
JOHN BURROUGHS.

In 1896, he writes concerning his newly published book on Walt:

West Park, New York,  
Nov. 22nd, 1896.

DEAR COL. INGERSOLL:

I am venturing to send you a copy of my Whitman book. I seldom send a book of mine to anybody, but I wanted to give myself the pleasure of sending you this, and I shall hope that it will not prove an intrusion.

I have heard with much concern of your recent illness.



I trust you will soon be well again. When I come to New York by and by I mean to make an effort to see you if you are at home.

With sincere affection,  
JOHN BURROUGHS.

A reading of it brought Bob's cordial indorsement of the book, and the author was genuinely pleased:

West Park, N. Y.,  
January 4, 1896.

DEAR COL. INGERSOLL:

I have never thanked you for your splendid letter about my Whitman book, which really warmed my heart. I was so proud of the letter that when I was in N. Y. I showed it to my publishers, and they at once wanted to print a sentence from it in an advertisement of the book. Of course I said no, but they extracted from me a promise to ask your permission to do so. There is no man in the country whose indorsement I so much value, but I would not have you say yes to this proposition if you have the least hesitation about it.

I hope that you are well again. Of course you overworked last fall. I have found a wonderful brain and nerve restorer in Fellows' Compound of Hypophosphites. Mr. Whitman told me that he thinks it saved his life a few years ago. It seems as if the civilized man sometimes gets to the point when he needs some deadly poison. It seems to surprise and tickle his whole nature.

A wonderful food too to restore nerve exhaustion is

concentrated clam juice—comes in bottles—all grocers have it. I can see clearer two hours after taking it. Hoping the New Year may bring you the best of boons—good health, I am

Cordially yours,  
JOHN BURROUGHS.

And besides Burroughs there was Mark Twain, whose friendship spanned more than twenty years and whose admiration never waned or wavered. It was no superficial admiration that he betrayed in his letters, but a fundamental and perdurable conviction:

Hartford, Aug., 1879.

MY DEAR INGERSOLL:

If you have a perfect copy of your peerless Chicago speech to spare, please let me have it. I have imperfect copies, but no others. I'm to read the speech to a young girls' club here, Saturday—but that is not the main thing. I want a perfect copy for my private scrapbook.

S. L. CLEMENS.

Hartford, Dec. 14, 1879.

MY DEAR INGERSOLL:

Thank you most heartily for the books. I am devouring them. They have found a hungry place, and they content it and satisfy it to a miracle. I wish I could hear you *speak* these splendid chapters before a great audience—to read them by myself and hear the boom of the applause only in the ear of my imagination, leaves a some-

thing wanting, and there is also a still greater lack, your manner, your voice and presence.

The Chicago speech arrived an hour too late, but I was all right anyway, for I found that my memory has been able to correct all the errors. I read it to the Saturday Club (of young girls) and told them to remember that it was doubtful if its superior existed in our language.

Truly yours,  
S. L. CLEMENS.

In the year of the controversy with Judge Black, promoted by the sporting Mr. Rice, the beloved playboy of American Letters wrote to give a ringside decision, as it were, of the proceedings:

Elmira, N. Y.,  
Aug. 10.

MY DEAR INGERSOLL:

Your letter and Mr. Stewart's and the book came while we were in the confusion of packing and moving our tribe from the seaside to this place; and I've been laid up with the lumbago ever since I reached here. I am just beginning to tackle my letters again.

I began a letter to Mr. Stewart, but I did not finish it, because I found I had really nothing to say, further than to thank him for his courtesy in sending me his book. I am not bold enough to express my opinion about it, for I never read poetry, and a criticism from me would be a thing which I should laugh at myself, and freely pardon in anybody else for following suit.

But I do read prose and am not perplexed for opinions

concerning it; and you may imagine I have been well entertained by your theological article, in the magazine, and Judge Black's ludicrous "reply" to it. Still more delicious, perhaps, than anything in Black's juvenile performance, have been the grave (and I suppose sincere) laudations of it in the newspapers. These ought to make a body laugh, but they make me want to cry—for it is so plain that to get men's praise or blame depends not upon whether one treats a religious topic well or ill, but merely upon which side of it he is. Judge Black is not a fool; therefore it must amuse him to the marrow to see his fatuous nonsense and coarse bluster received with bland respect by the whole respectable world.

Truly yours,  
S. L. CLEMENS.

Next to the art and practice of letters it was music that most stirred Bob and awoke in him an expression of appreciation so singularly felicitous that his written descriptions of its effect upon him sing like melodies themselves. A devoted admirer of Wagner, he held in intimate and affectionate friendship the great Wagnerian conductor, Seidl, who spent much of his time between his concerts of the Philharmonic Society discussing music with Bob and marvelling at the extraordinary perception of his friend. To Seidl, Bob was a phenomenon, a natural musician who, closing his eyes to listen, found that in his mind he beheld certain colours induced by certain notes. Edouard Remenyi was an even closer friend, and the great violinist delighted to play to him alone—or with only his family about him—bounding about the room,

his instrument at his chin, indulging those bewildering idiosyncrasies which alone hindered him from being one of the world's most illustrious virtuosi. Remenyi's epistolary style was no less eccentric:

Chicago 8th of Feb. 1892.

DEAR JUPITER:

I have to leave Chicago, where you know I fiddled myself into the heart of a few persons—like in number 400—Fifth Avenue. I am going to Racine, Janesville, Milwaukee and then je retour to Chicago (already)—and here in C. I will meet my own Ingersollibus at the Grand Pacific—should you prefer your fiddler's society—well you!—Oh my dear Pope Bob—you would come and take lunch with me and my friend Dr. E. H. Pratt, who is the very biggestest surgeon doctor on this globe—his charming wife—who is in her way a second edition of Eva Ingersoll, and you know what that means—well, you will do what you can or like—Liberty Hall!

Didn't you skin alive them N. Y. Clergymen?

Oh my eye!—sakes alive

Your porridge prodigy  
and admiring friend

The old Fiddler

E. REMENYI.

P. S. You will be pleased to meet a very big friend of mine, the Apollonean William Lawrence Tomlin.

Upon occasion, with the sublime egotism of a child, he would soliloquize thus upon his health:



73 West 85th Street,  
N. Y.

Thursday—12 Aug—1897.

TO COL. ROBERT INGERSOLL  
somewhere  
anywhere  
and  
everywhere

DEAR JUPITER:

Here I is at last in N. York and I long to see you and to tell you all—

Are you, are you all in good *health* because this Health matter is the thing—I knows it now, since I have been partly—mostly on the other side—now, I appreciate my *good* health—and I take precious good care of it—and to-day it is the 342d day that I am living on milk—and apples, and *rough-shoed* bread, but which is good enough for me, as it keeps me not only in ship-shape order, but through the apples in *apple pie* order—without the actual pie entering into my systèm—but all this is much *much too much* about me—but what is the principal thing *is*, that I hope to see you all soon—whereupon I will conclude my present epistolary with many loveable salaams to you, my prophet—and to you all—

Affectionately  
yrs

E. REMENYI.

P. S. I become very (h) aristocratic and *don't she know* very *recherché*—I found this *choice* paper at home—of course will use it and they will think me one of the 400—nay, one of the 250ies.

Poor Remenyi, the milk and the apples and the roughshod bread worked but a temporary healing. He died the following year, and Seidl, too, leaving Bob shorn of his two cherished men of melodies.

The theatre, also, found in Bob a warm and appreciative follower, and members of the profession so distinguished then and to-day as Booth, Barrett, and Joseph Jefferson, Julia Marlowe and Mrs. Fiske, William Gillette, and a multitude of others cherished his friendship and sought his counsel and support. Mrs. Fiske, especially, recalls his discrimination and the extreme sensitiveness of his perceptions.

"In my humblest days in the theatre I was never in a place too lowly for Ingersoll to seek me out, and I must have been but one of many struggling beginners who found their inspiration and cheer in the understanding of Robert Ingersoll; the understanding of the rare critic. How subtle that understanding of the theatre was, is well revealed in one remembered incident. After a scene of laughter—an exquisite, delicate sense of comedy—acted, if I remember, by Eleonora Duse—tears poured down Ingersoll's cheeks. 'That was quite too beautiful,' he said, 'it was hard to bear.' But the audience laughed. Laughed, as it was intended it should do."

All these enthusiasms enabled Bob to place buffers between himself and the strain inevitably created by ceaseless attack from a legion of individuals who bayed him unceasingly in the press for decades. Daily and before each lecture he was deluged with letters threatening assassination, invoking the sudden vengeance of God, asserting that ere he spoke his first word, some hand would

strike him down. Bob, his silk hat tipped a little to one side, would run hastily through these messages and then, observing that he had never known a man to do a thing he threatened to do, appear upon the platform, a mark of such generous proportions that a mere beginner at murder and at pistols could not have failed to hit him.

There was one earnest-minded man in New York whose sincere conviction it was that Bob was a menace to the civilized world. Consequently, one day he purchased a pistol and on the next stationed himself near the stoop of the Ingersoll house in Gramercy Park and awaited the emergence of Antichrist, due at a little after nine in the morning to repair to his offices. The door opened and the self-appointed Gabriel cocked his weapon and looked up. Sure enough, there he was, as big as life and an easy shot. But the avenger became terribly embarrassed. He could no more bear to explode his little gun at this quintessence of geniality and joy, this handsome old gentleman with his rose-leaf complexion, than he could bear to run naked up Fifth Avenue. He became suddenly terribly ashamed. He had made an awful fool of himself. He had committed a terrible social blunder. His countenance a fine purple, he avoided Bob's beaming eye and walked straight ahead until he came to the East River, and there he stopped and threw his perfectly new purchase as far as possible toward Brooklyn. But Bob ran this chance every time he spoke, and for forty-three years he lectured to packed and panting audiences in every state in the union save four, North Carolina, Mississippi, Oklahoma, and the Indian Territory, with the same flawless composure and distinguished success as

though just before going before his audience he had not received a score of notes informing him that if he opened his mouth he would never see his wife and children again.

He early gave up the hope of ever impressing upon the orthodox bedlam the fact that he was not an atheist but an agnostic, one who gave his lectures to the world as conclusions, his own conclusions, and not as facts, one who himself could not believe in an infinitely wise and powerful Being governing the world but who never once stated as a fact that no such Being existed, one who pleaded for belief to rest upon reason and who advocated the withholding of judgment pending the solution of the great problem. But in the end, though the bedlam continued, he had in 1899 ten listeners for every one that he had had in 1866. In the end he had, as has been said of him, as effectually freed the minds of two generations of Americans as had Lincoln the bodies of American blacks. "The Liberty of Man, Woman, and Child," "Some Mistakes of Moses," and "Why I Am an Agnostic" unshackled the minds of thousands upon thousands of men and women, some of whom fought hard to retain their gyves but who subconsciously came to relinquish them, though Bob was not always credited with the emancipation.

For more than four decades, the opposition exhausted every method of attack and fashion of slander possible for them to conceive of. They clamoured that Bob's daughters were drunkards, that he defended obscene literature, that he feared to meet in public debate various pastors from Kalamazoo east and west to the oceans, that as a soldier he had been recreant, as a lawyer corrupt, as a politician and a man simply too iniquitous to think

about. Sometimes Bob publicly harried the lie out of existence in the press, but more often he did nothing, for there were always men of a fiery mettle who defended him with so much fervour that those who bred the lies eventually became hard to find. One sincere and afflicted clergyman wrote to him to say that he had heard that Bob's only son spent his days in reading pornographic literature; that this pastime had addled his brains; that he had been committed to a retreat for imbeciles; and that he had there died. Bob wrote in reply that his son did not read obscenities; that he had not become insane; that he had not been incarcerated; that he had not died; and, finally, that he had no son. Another small but busy group had it that he was the eulogist of strong liquors, a notable potman, and the sworn enemy of temperance and sobriety. "Behold," they pointed out, "the letter that he writes his own son-in-law."

New York, April, 1887.

MY DEAR FRIEND:

I send you some of the most wonderful whisky that ever drove a skeleton from a feast or painted landscapes in the brain of man. It is the mingled souls of wheat and corn. In it you will find the sunshine and the shadow that chased each other over the billowy fields; the breath of June; the carol of the lark; the dews of night; the wealth of summer and autumn's rich content, all golden with imprisoned light. Drink it and you will hear the voices of men and maidens singing the "Harvest Home," mingled with the laughter of children. Drink it and you will feel within your blood the starlit dawns, the dreamy, tawny



dusks of many perfect days. For forty years this liquid joy has been within the happy staves of oak, longing to touch the lips of men.

R. G. INGERSOLL.

The letter is indeed Bob's, sent with the gift to the gentleman in question, at the time ill with pneumonia, for which malady whisky in small doses had been prescribed. But the charge missed fire since many of those who read the letter became feverishly thirsty and for the most part applauded a passage of masterly description. Slipping, this regiment of fanatics might have secured an additional handhold had it considered such a letter as Bob dispatched to a correspondent in Galveston, Tex., who had written to substantiate the charge that he was a Prohibitionist:

Washington, D. C., May 19, 1887.

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND:

I was never a Prohibitionist—never have believed in sumptuary legislation—but have always advocated the greatest individual liberty. . . . The trouble with Prohibition is that it fills the country with spies—makes neighbours suspicious of each other—fills the community with meddlers—with people who poke their impudent noses into the business of others. Besides, Prohibition does not prohibit—it does not even prohibit the Prohibitionists.

Yours truly,  
R. G. INGERSOLL.

But, curiously enough, it, too, seemed not to favour a measure so appallingly radical. Anti-tobacco monomaniacs attacked briefly but unsuccessfully his devotion to tobacco, a devotion which he thus floridly celebrated:

“Nearly four centuries ago Columbus, the adventurous, in the blessed island of Cuba, saw happy people with rolled leaves between their lips. Above their heads were little clouds of smoke. Their faces were serene, and in their eyes was the autumnal heaven of content. These people were kind, innocent, gentle, and loving.

“The climate of Cuba is the friendship of the earth and air, and of this climate the sacred leaves were born—the leaves that breed in the mind of him who uses them the cloudless, happy days in which they grew.

“These leaves make friends and celebrate with gentle rites the vows of peace. They have given consolation to the world. They are the companions of the lonely—the friends of the imprisoned—of the exile—of workers in mines—of fellers of forests—of sailors on the deep seas. They are the givers of strength and calm to the vexed and wearied minds of those who build with thought and brain the temples of the soul.

“They tell of hope and rest. They smooth the wrinkled brows of care—they drive fear and strange misshapen dreads from out the mind, and fill the heart with rest and peace. Within their magic warp and woof some potent, gracious spell imprisoned lies that, when released by fire, doth softly steal within the fortress of the brain, and bind in sleep the captured sentinels of care and grief.

“These leaves are the friend of the fireside, and their

smokelike incense rises from myriads of happy homes. Cuba is the smile of the sea."

Though Bob might have been, for this, accused of writing an advertising prospectus for a popular winter resort, the anti-tobacco faction were signally unsuccessful in establishing for it an iniquitous moral significance. In fact, even when the faction heard that to a young cigar salesman to whom he had given permission to name a cigar after him, Bob had suggested as a selling slogan "Smoke here and not hereafter," it was powerless to awaken a widespread popular resentment and was therefore the more bitterly grieved when the cigar salesman made a fortune.

But of such attacks, some of them not undiverting, and of such panaceas, was made up the reverse of the medal of Bob's existence. With age close upon him, he was a man of battles, one who since his early manhood had fought for his convictions and who had been most lustily opposed. At three-and-twenty he had opened the campaign at the picnic in Shawneetown, and his observations that day upon Tom Paine had fixed the tenor of an attack fortissimo that was to last for five-and-forty years, for at the end he had never been more downright and in fettle. In startling paradox the obverse of the medal was a lifelong opposition to war, and speeches which, as Melville E. Stone pointed out in an article in the *New York Sunday Times* published more than twenty years after Bob's death, embodied the first suggestions for the establishment of a world court. Mr. Stone remarked in part:

"Ingersoll was among the first to suggest the establishment of a world court.

"It should be remembered that when Ingersoll was alive the modern League of Nations had not been thought of, the Czar of Russia had not summoned the first peace conference at The Hague, and the world tribunal had not been set up in the Dutch capital. But Ingersoll's flaming words, uttered thirty years ago, sound as though they were current to-day in the prolonged debate over the International Court of Justice established by the League of Nations. . . ."

Such was Bob's loathing of war and of anything connected with it that, when he lived in the big house at 400 Fifth Avenue in New York City, he would, when a parade of soldiers marching to the punctuated rhythm of the drum swung up the crowded street, go to the back of his house and sit with his palms fast over his ears, until the hated panoply had passed. And yet he was above all other men of his generation most notably and consistently that one thing, a man of battles, a great fighter, in controversies a duellist than whom no more formidable has ever in history existed. Thus, when in the spring of 1892 he returned home from the cemetery where he had seen the last housing of his old friend, Walt, it was upon this paradox that his mind lingered. In his nine-and-fiftieth year the blades rang just as furiously. . . . There were always foemen. His path was as ever hedged round with their ready steel. But then, had it not been, it is certain that he would have ceased greatly to enjoy its progress.

## CHAPTER XXI

BOB published in 1894 lectures on Lincoln, Voltaire, and the Bible and dispatched to the New York *World* a brief letter entitled "Is Suicide a Sin?" His opponents, reading this, fell into ranks with a loud shout of joy and the *Christian Advocate* moved into action with the statement that "Ingersoll, by reason of his teachings, has earned for himself the title of the Patron of Suicide." Bob had, in effect, observed that under certain circumstances a man might be justified in taking his own life, such circumstances, for an instance, as these: A man, the last passenger on the deck of a burning ship, with the alternative of diving overboard to be drowned or remaining to be burnt might be pardoned for embracing voluntarily the former death. Those who actually read the letter murmured that the Colonel, ageing, was becoming a little obvious, but the enemy preferred to read a satanic subtlety into all this. The battle raged for nearly four years, but in a manner desultory and without interest for any save the attacking forces. In the end, these ceased to amuse even the editors bombarded with their statements and remarks, for the editors were of the opinion that it was no longer a profitable undertaking to try to get a rise out of the old man.

The year 1895 brought the publication of a new lecture assailing "The Foundations of Faith," but to Bob a far more memorable incident was a reunion at Elmwood in



Illinois of his old regiment, the Eleventh Cavalry of that state. The guest of honour and, of course, the orator of the occasion, Bob arrived on September 5th in Elmwood upon a special train from Peoria, accompanied by five hundred of that city's leading citizens, to find the little town already crowded with tiny Bobs, busts, statues, and photographs, that beamed at him, jocund amorini, from every window and upon every wall and hoarding. The streets were crowded with old men in blue, for five other regiments were taking part in the proceedings, and as Bob rolled up between the lines of those hardy boys, now gray and a little rheumatic, that had before Shiloh fought for him with their fists, and later, most lustily with government supplies, forty-four years dropped off his shoulders like a cloak. They were all old men together, old men with the glory of their great days behind them, but that fugitive boyhood which creeps back after sixty into hearts uncomplicated by silly pomposities, lit eyes a little dimmed and lived in voices no longer quite so resonant and full.

"We're glad to see you, Bob," his children piped in voices untuned by emotion, and grinned and were very angry because lined cheeks were tickling with the tears. Bob Ingersoll of Peoria, Ingersoll of Illinois. He hadn't changed a bit that they could see. He knew them all, and cussed if he wasn't licking up a tear or two himself. As he went toward the stand, Peoria's ancient cannon spoke thirteen times, and the veterans punched each other in aged ribs and dusted faded blue cloth. It sounded like the old days, and the Eleventh Cavalry of Illinois, reviewed by their Colonel, were again the smartest outfit in the service. They formed into ranks and marched by the

reviewing stand, each platoon, as it drew near, snapping gray heads to the left with the order, toward the big familiar figure up yonder making believe the dust got in his eyes and he couldn't find his handkerchief.

They shouted a great shout when Mr. Brown came forward to introduce the chief, and they sang, with voices which they detested because they broke, a song composed in his honour. When Mr. Brown recalled to them that twenty-five years before in Rouse's Hall, at home in Peoria, Bob had said that thenceforward there would be one free man in Illinois, they shouted again and looked affectionately at each other and swore a little to vindicate their manhood and murmured, "Yes, sir, Bob's the boy for us. Yes, sir, damned if he ain't." Then, like children, they became hushed. The Old Man was going to talk.

"Ladies and Gentlemen, Fellow-citizens, Old Friends and Comrades: It gives me the greatest pleasure to meet again those with whom I became acquainted in the morning of my life. It is now afternoon. The sun of life is slowly sinking in the west, and, as the evening comes, nothing can be more delightful than to see again the faces that I knew in youth.

"When I first knew you the hair was brown; it is now white. The lines were not quite so deep, and the eyes were not quite so dim. Mingled with this pleasure is sadness—sadness for those who have passed away—for the dead. . . ."

His children nodded. "He knows," they murmured, "it's Ebon he might be thinking on. Yes, I reckon, Ebon."

"And what shall I say to you, survivors of death-filled

days? To you, my comrades, to you whom I have known in the great days, in the time when the heart beat fast and the blood flowed strong; in the days of high hope—what shall I say?”

The great days . . .

“Seems like there’s a hell of a lot of cryin’ at this here reunion,” the old men said, and forthwith cried the harder. To their colonel it was the last salute of the Eleventh Cavalry of Illinois.

The new year saw the publication and the delivery of Bob’s credo, “Why I Am an Agnostic,” and the last participation in a national political struggle of the big gun of the Republican party. Meeting in St. Louis on June 16th, that organization duly nominated Mr. McKinley, ex-governor of Ohio, while the Democrats, hilarious with excitement after young Mr. Bryan’s surprising rhetoric, nominated him on the fifth ballot with no less than 500 of the possible 768 votes. Bob, enabled by earnest convictions that there should not be free and unlimited silver and gold at 16 to 1, to express his mind concerning them agreed to speak as often as circumstances would permit, and the relief that this decision spread in the camp of his party is slightly indicated by a letter from Frank Gilbert, at the time political editor of the Chicago *Inter-Ocean*, written to Bob on September 27th:

“I am delighted that you are to give us so many speeches. . . . I want to see the silver craze, not the man Bryan, honoured with a regular Napoleonic tomb. Pile the stones up until there can be no body-snatching four years hence! In fact, it is high time for the American people to put a stop to the jeopardizing of business for

campaign purposes. . . . That is the reason I want my voice heard. Of course, there is the personal element. I just want the country to realize that the orator of orators still lives, and that the genius which flashed out at Cincinnati has lost none of its fire."

In a tent which proud Chicagoans claimed was the biggest tent in the world, pitched near the corner of Sacramento Avenue and Lake Street over the heads of more than twenty thousand hoarse and howling throats, the big gun spoke on October 8th. Mr. Gilbert "covered him" in a lengthy report of which this is a part:

"That same sentiment, in thought, emotion, or vocal expression emanated from upward of twenty thousand citizens last night who heard the eloquent and magic Ingersoll . . . as he expounded the living gospel of true republicanism.

"The old war horse, silvered by long years of faithful service to his country, aroused the same all-pervading enthusiasm as he did in the campaigns of Grant and Hayes and Garfield.

"He has lost not one whit, not one iota, of his striking physical presence, his profound reasoning, his convincing logic, his rollicking wit, grandiloquence—in fact, all the graces of the orator of old, reinforced by increased patriotism and the ardour of the call to battle for his country, are still his in the fullest measure.

"Ingersoll, in his powerful speech at Cincinnati, spoke in behalf of a friend; last night he pled for his country. In 1876 he eulogized a man; last night, twenty years afterward, he upheld the principles of a democratic government. Such was the difference in his theme; the logic,

the eloquence, of his utterances, was the more profound in the same ratio.

"He came to the ground-floor of human existence and talked as man to man. His patriotism, be it religion, sentiment, or that lofty spirit inseparable from man's soul, is his life. Last night he sought to inspire those who heard him with the same loyalty, and he succeeded.

"Those passionate outbursts of eloquence, the wit that fairly scintillated, the logic as inexorable as heaven's decrees, his rich rhetoric and inimitable facts driven straight to his hearers with the strength of bullets, aroused applause that came as spontaneous as sunlight."

Three weeks later, on October 29th, Bob, opening the campaign in New York, faced the packed and roaring horseshoe of Carnegie Hall, and when the renewed thunder that followed John E. Milholland's introductory words, "There is no intelligent audience in the civilized world to which it would be necessary to introduce Robert G. Ingersoll," had died into complete silence, made the last and perhaps the most effective political speech of his life.

When he had made an end, the thousands who had listened, in their eyes the fixed and stubborn expression of people who intend to shout until their vocal cords, strained and fraying, force them to silence, cheered till they seemed hypnotized by their own voices. Shortly afterward, as in the case of the two previous Republican candidates that he had supported, Mr. McKinley was elected.

A little more than two weeks later, lecturing in Janesville, Wisconsin, he felt for an instant a sudden whirling, a roar as if of waters, in his head. He did not pause, but



in Chicago, a few days later, Dr. Frank Billings informed him that he had sustained a cerebral hemorrhage and that he must at once give up all work for a definite period. Nevertheless, the new year found him again on the platform, his eloquence undiminished and his vigour apparently crescent rather than waning, but there lurked a new enemy at hand. For the next two years angina pectoris attacked him with a multiplicity of agonies. Undaunted, Bob worked and wrote continually, publishing in 1897 "The Truth" and "A Thanksgiving Sermon," in 1898 "Superstition," and in the early weeks of 1899 "The Devil," a reply to the bombardment awakened by "Superstition." On June 2d of that year he addressed in the Hollis Theatre in Boston the American Free Religious Association on the subject "What Is Religion?" and observed with a charming smile that the assemblage was sown with clergymen. Three weeks later in Camden, N. J., before the vice chancellor of that state, he argued his last case at law, *Russell vs. Russell*, appearing as Mrs. Russell's counsel, that lady being engaged in litigation touching the disposition of her late husband's will. In July, avoiding any engagements, he took the vacation that his family demanded of him and went to "Walston," the country estate on the highlands of the Hudson, belonging to his son-in-law, Walston H. Brown. He was within a month of his sixty-seventh birthday.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Walston," wide-lawned and murmurous with little winds and with the Hudson like blue champagne below it, was deeply restful to a man a little weary of hot and

crowded halls and a courtroom the air of which had been close and thick with prejudice and tired schemings. Bob was not unduly tired, no more tired than a man of his age had a right to be, but the days at "Walston," beautiful with monotony, induced a noble calm and that reminiscence which is the handmaiden of age. With the fine smoke of his big Havanas drifting lazily along the broad veranda to swoop suddenly away into the blue of the sky, he could, amid all that was best in life, the love of family and esteem of friends, let his mind run over his life as the hand of the pianist idles in octaves upon the keyboard. Watching his grandchildren upon the lawns playing a game which seemed to consist almost entirely of ambitious sprinting around and around in a circle, he thought with a sudden warm content that his days had led him somewhere, that he had cut a trail, tough as had been that underbrush of opposition, a trail that others had followed and would follow. How sweet in the leisure of repose was the consciousness of achievement. Even the remembrance of all manner of hardships and discouragements. What a life it had been, Cazenovia, Belleville, Ashtabula, hamlets in Ohio and Illinois now grown to cities, where with Clark he had cultivated the first germ seeds of revolt. Dear Clark, dear fellow. His last words had been, "I am better now," and he had gone suddenly to sleep, as suddenly and swiftly as when in the old, old days the Rabelaisian Sarah had taken away the candle, leaving them both for an instant wide-eyed in the dark, and then sound, sound asleep. Twenty years ago Clark had gone. Twenty years.

It seemed like far less than that, but after all in a man's

life what was twenty years? For forty-four years he himself had practised law and still practised it and it was good to remember that such a man as Conkling had considered him the first counsellor and advocate of his time. For forty-three years he had lectured upon rationalism and he intended to continue to do so. There were plans to be discussed for the fall. . . . He had taken part in every Republican campaign save two since 1864, when, with Clark Carr and Jack Logan, he had helped to assure Illinois for Mr. Lincoln. And that was thirty-five years ago. No, twenty years wasn't much. He could still think of Clark familiarly, as one recalls the expression or look in the eyes of a friend who has gone away for an hour or so, promising to return.

How things had changed since he and Clark had sat in Shawneetown, cussing the place because nothing ever happened there. Douglas Democrats they had been then, and not a long while later he had been doing his damndest to defeat Mr. Lincoln. And then Sumter and the shock of Shiloh, the dreary days before Corinth and Forrest, the bully old grizzly, whittling his kindling wood and drinking rye whisky from the same jug as his men. No wars since, except this Spanish business, and that was a good cause provided the administration didn't botch the affair now it was over. To an editor he had written just yesterday his feelings about the thing:

"It is true that I think the treatment of the Filipinos wrong—foolish. It is also true that I do not want the Filipinos if they do not want us. I believe in expansion—if it is honest.

"I want Cuba if the Cubans want us. . . ."

Liberty, the biggest thing in life. . . .

He examined his cigar with affection, exhaling the full strong smoke in spaced blue puffs from his nostrils.

Cuba, the smile of the sea. . . .

There was a young wind that chuckled and sighed in the trees like an obbligato of one of the woods in Seidl's orchestra. Seidl was dead, too, and what a loss it was. He remembered one night that he had criticized the relative position of the harp to the other instruments, and the great conductor, instead of reflecting irritation at a layman's ignorance, had bounced on to his feet and exclaimed "Great God! You are the only man but one whom I have ever heard make that criticism, and that was Richard Wagner." And then there was Remenyi, the sublime baby, dead in spite of the rough-shoed bread he ate and carried about with him, and the apples, the apples over which he rhapsodized because they kept him in apple-pie order. Remenyi's puns, better, as a matter of fact, than one would look for in the man who had been solo violinist to Victoria.

"A fairy piece, full of wings and glancing feet, moonlight and melody, where fountains fall in showers of pearl, and waves of music die on sands of gold." Something he had written himself about Edouard's playing. "In my mind the old tones are still rising and falling—still throbbing, pleading, beseeching, imploring, wailing like the lost—rising winged and triumphant, superb and victorious—then caressing, whispering every thought of love—panting with passion—fading to silence as softly and imperceptibly as consciousness is lost in sleep."

Lost in sleep. . . . For a tired man there was little

but graciousness in that thought of sleep. He himself had slept most evilly last night. Indigestion had wrought now dreams and now a weary wakefulness, but he had felt better after breakfast. He might be good for years yet, but he thought not. Ever since that knife had sunk and twisted in his heart two years and a half ago, he knew he might go any minute. Angina pectoris, the one thing you couldn't beat however sound the reason of your argument. But no one knew but himself. His dearest Eva and his daughters didn't guess. No reason to worry folks he loved and who loved him.

No man had lived happier than he had, no man had ever had a sweeter home, a dearer wife and children. Happiness had bred in him a cure for others, people sick with apprehension or worries, who spoke with him awhile and seemed to go away cheered up and almost gay. There was that homicidal maniac whom he had saved from hanging and who, when he felt the cloud descending, would walk twenty miles and sit all night on Bob's doorstep, happy if he was near the Colonel. In the morning Bob would find him there and the two would go downtown, the big man with the wild eyes following a few paces behind the lawyer, confident that no harm could overtake him. By and by the fit would pass and the man would go away again, walk the twenty miles back to his home, all safe and comfortable in his mind once more.

He had always had a curious influence over the insane. He seemed to drive away those black spaces that kept edging down into their minds, driving them headlong into horror.

His wife was coming along the veranda, through the



squares of sunlight and cool shadows, as beautiful and serene as she had been that night at dinner in Groveland thirty-nine years ago.

How lovely she was. . . .

It was a half after ten. He would go up to his room and nap for a while, make up some of that sleep that he had lost last night, and then play a little billiards with Walston. A great game, billiards. He had heard that Mark Twain was quite a hand at it.

Dozing off, he felt his wife's cool fingers upon his forehead. July 21, 1899. Just one hundred years ago his dear old Robert Burns had died. . . .

Bob slept awhile. It was a little before noon when he awoke and sought to go downstairs where he could hear the even click of the billiard balls at caroms. Walston was doubtless practising to beat the old man.

He bent over to tie his shoes. His wife moved toward him as her sister, Mrs. Farrell, and an intimate of his family, Miss Sharkey, entered the room. The sun was on the floor, yellow like a golden sheet before his eyes, and for an instant it seemed to hold them, bent over as he was, and when he straightened the knife was twisting. It seemed as though his heart was contracting, sending out jagged zig-zags of tangible pain, zig-zags like the popular conception of lightning.

"Don't dress, Papa, until after luncheon—I will eat upstairs with you."

Dear Eva. . . . "Oh, no; I don't want to trouble you. . . ."

His heart was expanding again, sending out zig-zags.

. . .

"How absurd, after the hundreds of times you have eaten upstairs with her."

He smiled as Mrs. Farrell spoke. There was a little laughter in the room, with the sunlight and the love in Eva's eyes. They were looking into his. The smile had become wonderfully intimate. A thing exceedingly precious all their own. She was saying something about medicine, but his pain had gone, suddenly, leaving in that heart of his a limitless and tender peace.

Speaking, there lingered in his voice the music of content:

"I am better now."

## AFTERWORD

It is doubtful whether the passing of any other private citizen in the history of the United States has ever occasioned the exhaustive editorial mention that did Bob's on July 21, 1899. He had always been a notable favourite with the American press and in his later years with that of nearly every nation in the world, but on his death the journals from coast to coast and from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico, that had rejoiced in him when alive as being always "news," reflected a deep and very genuine sense of loss widely expressed and shared in by the public. Old enemies sought for a brief space to disseminate statements that he had, as they put it, recanted, but the deception was too obvious and the lies badly fashioned, though to put an end to them his family once signed a sworn statement to the contrary. Almost the last letter that he ever wrote is in this respect not without interest.

New York, July 13, 1899.

C. J. ROBBINS, Esq.

DEAR SIR:

First accept a thousand thanks for your good letter. The only trouble is that it is too flattering. You are right in thinking that I have not changed. I still believe that all religions are based on falsehoods and mistakes. I still deny the existence of the supernatural, and I still say that

real religion is usefulness. Thanking you again, I remain

Yours always,

R. G. INGERSOLL.

A service marked by extreme simplicity and the reading of three selections from his own writings was held at Walston on July 25th. Professor John Clark Ridpath read "The Declaration of the Free," Major Orlando J. Smith "My Religion," and Doctor John Lovejoy Elliott, "A Tribute to Ebon C. Ingersoll." His body was cremated on Thursday, July 27th.

On October 28, 1911, a statue was unveiled to him in Peoria and at Dresden, New York, on August 11, 1921, the house in which he was born was dedicated as a perpetual memorial. The place of his residence, 52 Gramercy Park, New York City, now occupied by the Gramercy Park Hotel, was on November 9, 1925, commemorated by a bronze tablet affixed in the south wall of that building, and within, on the top floor, there is housed a memorial library. The tablet is thus inscribed:

ON THIS SITE  
WAS THE HOME OF  
ROBERT G. INGERSOLL  
"HE KNEW NO FEAR EXCEPT  
THE FEAR OF DOING WRONG"  
BORN 1833 DIED 1899

From a great number of tributes from many illustrious individuals, the biographer can select no more splendid estimate of Bob the man than this, written twenty-six

years ago by Mark Twain, to Bob's sister-in-law, Mrs. Sue M. Farrell:

30 Wellington Court,  
Albert Gate, London.

DEAR MRS. FARRELL:

Except my daughter's, I have not grieved for any death as I have grieved for his. His was a great and beautiful spirit, he was a man—all man, from his crown to his footsoles. My reverence for him was deep and genuine; I prized his affection for me and returned it with usury.

Sincerely yours,  
S. L. CLEMENS.

To-day, when the majority of Bob's beliefs are, in comparison with much current and accepted doctrine, astonishingly mild and strangely obvious, it is hard to think of him as one of whom a Baptist minister, or so I am told, could in the 1880's say in all sincerity, that his shoes contained not human feet but hooves. The theologians, during the quarter century that has elapsed since his death, have themselves changed all that. Now, one may, with no emotion save admiration, look back upon his work as one of emancipation, and touching his personality it is safe to say that there never lived a man or a woman, or a child who, knowing Bob, did not love and, in their several fashions, greatly revere him.

THE END



















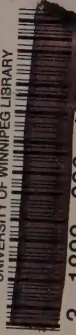
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